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# MEASURING IMPACT FY15 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

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This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Environmental Incentives, LLC, Foundations of Success, and ICF International.

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The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

# **MEASURING IMPACT**

## **CONTRACT INFORMATION**

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## ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

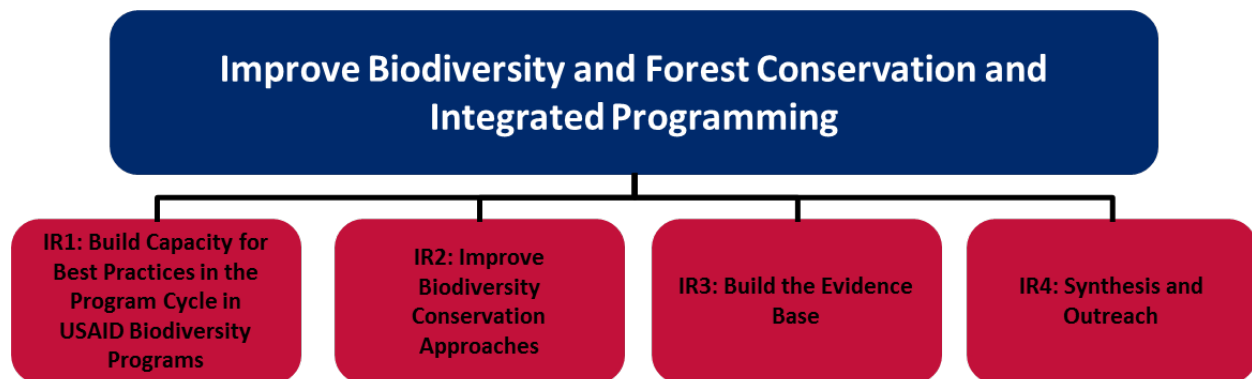
AM	Adaptive Management
AMNH	American Museum of Natural History
BCN	Biodiversity Conservation Network
BCP	Biodiversity Conservation Project
BFS	Bureau for Food Security
B+WISER	Biodiversity and Watersheds Improved for Stronger Economy & Ecosystem Resilience
CARPE	Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment
CBA	Cost Benefit Analysis
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
CKM	Communications and Knowledge Management
CLA	Collaborating Learning and Adapting
CLG	Collaborative Learning Group
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer's Representatives
CWC	Combating Wildlife Crime
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DEC	Development Experience Clearinghouse
DHS	Demographic and Health Surveys
DO	Development Objective
E3/FAB	Bureau of Economic Growth, Education and the Environment/Office of Forestry and Biodiversity
ECO	Environmental Communication, Learning, and Outreach
ECOFISH	Ecosystems Improved for Sustainable Fisheries
EI	Environmental Incentives
FCCA	Forest, Climate, and Communities Alliance
FY	Fiscal Year
GCC	Global Climate Change
ICAA	The Initiative for Conservation in the Andean Amazon
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IR	Intermediate Result
LER	Learning, Evaluation, and Research
LOE	Level of Effort
LOP	Life of Project
ME&L	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MI	Measuring Impact
OEECC	Office of Environment, Energy, and Climate Change
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PIRS	Performance Indicator Reference Sheet
POC	Point of Contact
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PPL	Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning
RDMA	Regional Development Mission for Asia
RFP	Request For Proposal
RM Portal	Natural Resources and Development Portal
SAR	South American Regional Office
SBU	Sensitive but Unclassified
SCAPES	Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems
SOF	Synthesis of Findings
SOW	Scope of Work
SPP	Strategic Planning and Programming
TA	Technical Assistance
TDY	Temporary Duty

TEC	Technical Evaluation Committee
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TOC	Theory of Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society

## I. INTRODUCTION

### OVERVIEW OF MEASURING IMPACT

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and its partners see biodiversity as a critical component supporting human wellbeing and other important development goals. While biodiversity conservation is a priority in its own right, it is also important that development professionals and decision-makers across the Agency understand the role of biodiversity in supporting crucial ecosystem services that underpin other development priorities such as food security, water provision, adaptation to climate change, and mitigation of threats to human health. Measuring Impact (MI) will test theories of change that link actions to improved development outcomes in biodiversity and human wellbeing.



*Figure 1: Structure of the MI Goal and Intermediate Results*

The goal of MI is that USAID's biodiversity conservation programming is improved through the practice of mainstreaming best practices in implementing the Program Cycle, including using theories of change and systematic learning, and by developing evidence to support decisions in conservation programming and the integration of conservation with other development sectors. Four Intermediate Results (IRs) have been defined to achieve the MI goal (Figure 1). These IRs have been developed as strategic approaches in MI's theory of change (TOC), including building capacity for best practices in implementing the Program Cycle (IR1), improving biodiversity conservation approaches through systematic learning (IR2), building the evidence base for conservation programming (IR3), and synthesis and outreach (IR4).

USAID's 2014 Biodiversity Policy reinvigorated the Agency's commitment to conservation for sustainable, resilient development. The Policy's two goals, to conserve biodiversity in priority places and to integrate biodiversity as an essential component of human development, are supported by six objectives and a strategy to allocate resources to a set of Tier-1 countries that feature high priority biodiversity and ecosystems. The Policy emphasizes the use of best practices in project design and use of evidence to support improved programs; addressing the threats and drivers of biodiversity loss, especially wildlife trafficking; and integrating biodiversity and other development sectors for improved outcomes.

MI will help USAID advance its leadership in developing and implementing evidence-based programs that improve conservation outcomes and human wellbeing by building the capacity of the Agency to design and learn from biodiversity programs and by enhancing the evidence base that informs programming decisions.

## II. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In Fiscal Year (FY) 15, MI continued Mission support and USAID trainings, launched the Cross-Mission Learning Program, initiated research into key areas of interest to USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and the Environment, Forestry, and Biodiversity Office (E3/FAB) and Missions, and completed learning-support materials to inform best practices in the Program Cycle. FY15 highlights include:

1. Providing technical assistance (TA) and training to 11 Missions and E3/FAB.
2. Launching the Learning Program through a webinar focused on using a TOC to synthesize lessons on the effectiveness of conservation enterprises, as well as extensive technical support on the development and refinement of Combating Wildlife Crime TOCs and indicators.
3. Producing key research products on priority conservation topics in partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH).
4. Producing several foundational documents, including three Biodiversity How-To Guides, the Framework for Mainstreaming, Learning and Adapting (MLA), and training modules related to adaptive management.
5. Completing implementation of the MI staffing plan with the hires of a Senior Synthesis and Outreach Specialist, a Learning Technical Specialist, a Project Coordinator, and an Adaptive Management Specialist.

## IR1: BUILD CAPACITY FOR BEST PRACTICES IN THE PROGRAM CYCLE IN USAID BIODIVERSITY PROGRAMS

IR1 had a highly productive year in FY15, providing technical assistance and training to 11 focal Missions resulting in the increased capacity of USAID staff to implement best practices in the Program Cycle. The following sections provide annual highlights, progress updates against the approved MI FY15 work plan, and details regarding IR1 engagement with E3/FAB and key partner offices. Specific highlights for FY15 include:

- Using project results chains to collaboratively define priority evaluation questions and available datasets to ensure robust and valuable midterm performance evaluations in the Philippines with the Office of Energy, Environment, and Climate Change (OEECC) and implementing partners.
- Participating as a non-voting member in the Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) reviews for two separate mechanisms in Indonesia. MI's participation generated valuable lessons on how to closely link project design to procurement, and generated new measures that can be adopted by other Missions in the future. Following this, the Madagascar Mission requested assistance to initiate a similar process with MI support.
- Facilitating bilateral workshops with E3/FAB staff across Peru, Brazil, and Colombia in preparation for a regional workshop facilitated by the South American Regional (SAR) Mission to define country pressures, strategic approaches, and TOCs. The results of these workshops informed the design of the regional Natural Resource Management (NRM) strategy that is aligned with bilateral efforts that can be monitored and assessed to understand the collective impact on biodiversity conservation.
- Providing TA for the design of the SAR NRM Project Appraisal Document (PAD) through a collaborative, rigorous, and evidence-based process that resulted in the identification of critical threats to biodiversity in the Andean Amazon and the selection of strategic approaches to minimize those threats. This process included staff from E3/FAB, the GeoCenter, the SAR Mission, the bilateral Missions of Peru, Brazil and Colombia, and MI.
- Providing TA for the development of the cross-mechanism evaluation framework spanning CAFEC (Central Africa Forest Ecosystems Conservation) and EMAPS (Environmental Monitoring and Policy Support) to assess their combined impact across sites and landscapes in the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE).

The following sections provide progress updates against the approved MI FY15 annual work plan, and details regarding IR1 engagement with E3/FAB and key partner offices.

### PLANNING AND PRIORITY-SETTING IN FOCAL MISSIONS (ACTIVITY 1.1.1)

Quarterly review sessions between MI Regional Leads and E3/FAB Points of Contact (POCs) serve as reflection points throughout the year to discuss and plan around priority issues, as well as opportunities to gather feedback from E3/FAB on critical topics.

Quarter	Date Delivered	Key Topics
Q1	December 9, 2014	The <b>first quarterly review</b> session for FY15 focused on capacity building. IR1 discussed the convergence of MI's and E3/FAB's training efforts, specifically how the MI capacity-building plan can best complement and expand the E3/FAB near- and long-term training strategy. MI staff also held a three-part discussion on building capacity for best practices in the Program Cycle and Biodiversity Policy, including core competencies, capacity gaps IR1 has observed across pilot Missions, and a strategic approach to building capacity of focal Missions and E3/FAB.
Q2	March 26, 2015	The <b>second quarterly review</b> for FY15 focused on (1) the MI Capacity Building Plan, (2) previewing the Library of Products for Best Practices in Implementing the Program Cycle (Deliverable 4.4.1), (3) presenting and discussing the use of



		TOCs to inform the procurement process in Indonesia, and (4) a discussion of challenges and opportunities across focal Missions. This session culminated with feedback from E3/FAB on priority audiences and competencies for MI's capacity building efforts and a set of recommendations to make the Library a demand-driven product for E3/FAB.
<b>Q3</b>	May 7, 2015	The <b>third quarterly review</b> for FY15 focused on (1) presenting findings from the Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) annual report (Deliverable 1.1.1.B), and (2) vetting new opportunities to engage Missions and discussing where E3/FAB should invest their resources to realize the greatest impact. This is the second year that IR1 has applied the CBA report findings to inform MI's collective learning and lay an analytic foundation to inform priorities for Mission-specific work plans and FY16 strategic and work planning. The CBA results enable MI and E3/FAB to examine progress to date along the MI results chain, apply adaptive management best practices, and consider the sustainability of E3/FAB's investment beyond the life of MI.
<b>Q4</b>	September 21, 2015	The <b>fourth quarterly review</b> for FY15 was conducted as part of the Synthesis of Findings (SOF) and strategic planning efforts for FY16. As part of this process, five Mission POCs were interviewed by E3/FAB and MI staff to gather feedback on MI's successes, challenges, and opportunities in implementing the Program Cycle and aligning with the Biodiversity Policy and Code. Results of the interviews were highlighted in the MI Look Back session during the FY16 Strategic Planning Retreat in September.

## CHECKLIST FOR BEST PRACTICES IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM CYCLE (ACTIVITY 1.1.2)

Upon agreement with E3/FAB, MI adjusted the delivery of the Checklist based on the longer-than-anticipated timeline for production of the Framework for Mainstreaming Learning and Adapting (Deliverable 4.1.1). The Checklist will be developed during FY16-17 based on the conceptual underpinnings of the Framework.

## BUILD CAPACITY OF USAID AM PRACTITIONERS AND ADVISORS (ACTIVITY 1.2.1)

A final MI Capacity Building Plan (Deliverable 1.2.1.A) was submitted to the IR1 Activity Manager (AM) on March 23. A joint product with IR4, the Capacity Building Plan details MI's added-value approach to capacity building, target audiences, competencies for implementing best practices in the Program Cycle, and includes a schedule of technical assistance and training events planned for FY15. To ensure broad alignment between MI's capacity building efforts and E3/FAB's training strategy, key elements of the MI Capacity Building Plan were socialized throughout the E3/FAB office. The final version responds to both written and verbal feedback. MI held several meetings with the E3/FAB training steering committee and the implementer of the Environmental Communication, Learning, and Outreach (ECO) project, Training Resources Group, to share information and advance strategic planning for E3/FAB's 2015-2020 Training Strategy. MI's inputs to the planning process included content on target audiences and competencies.

To reinforce AM concepts and build USAID staff capacity, IR1 provided two virtual webinars (Deliverable 1.2.1.B) on special topics as follow-ups to regular TA provided to Missions. These webinars use USAID-relevant examples to reinforce or address complex questions pertaining to AM concepts, spanning situation models, theories of change, and indicator selection. In FY15, this included a presentation to the Madagascar Mission on viability assessments, including an overview of the assessment process, specific examples, best practices, and the use of viability assessments to define project sub-purposes. IR1 delivered the second webinar to the SAR Mission on March 30. This presentation covered best practices of Program Cycle and Biodiversity Code application at a regional level, drawing out lessons learned from CARPE to inform SAR planning.

Finally, IR1 staff coordinated extensively with IR4 to produce three training PowerPoints (Deliverable 1.2.1.C) related to the three Biodiversity How-To Guides (Activity 4.3.1). Staff work completed under this deliverable is described under the IR4 Accomplishments section.

### **PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING TO FOCAL MISSIONS (ACTIVITY 1.3.1)**

Throughout FY15, the IR1 team provided extensive technical support and training to eleven Missions and two Regional Missions.<sup>1</sup> IR1 staff coordinated with Missions and E3/FAB to arrange workshop agendas, worked across IRs to effectively coordinate TA, delivered virtual workshops, and provided extensive technical assistance in Brazil, CARPE, Colombia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, SAR, Uganda, and Vietnam. Throughout FY15, IR1 completed fourteen site visits to Missions and Regional Missions:

- October 6-10: Madagascar
- November 3-7: Vietnam
- November 4-12: CARPE
- January 27-19: Peru
- February 24-26: Peru
- March 5-6: Brazil
- March 2-13: Philippines
- March 23-30: Mozambique
- March 23-25: Uganda
- March 30-April 24: Madagascar
- April 13-17: SAR
- June 1-5: Peru
- August 17-21: RDMA
- September 14-18: Indonesia

After all site visits, MI produced a brief summary of outputs, observations and recommendations for dissemination to relevant USAID staff. These documents provide a systematic report on each Temporary Duty (TDY) and details on the agenda, workshop objectives, and key outputs, as well as a brief summary of MI and E3/FAB's combined observations and recommendations.

The following section provides three case examples from Madagascar, the Philippines, and Peru to highlight the challenges and opportunities encountered when delivering TA and training on the use of SMs and TOCs to implement best practices in the Program Cycle.

#### **MADAGASCAR CASE EXAMPLE: USING SMS AND TOCS TO DESIGN PAD AND ACTIVITY SOWS**

In the first quarter of FY15, USAID/Madagascar requested E3/FAB and MI's assistance with the initial conceptualization phase of their new Biodiversity PAD. This Biodiversity PAD was a new beginning for biodiversity programming following re-opening of the Mission after a several-year hiatus in USAID programming due to the country's 2009 coup and subsequent instability. This request for help at the "ground floor" was an opportunity for E3/FAB and MI to help the PAD development team apply best practices in implementing the Program Cycle at the outset of their biodiversity program.

Based on the initial request for assistance with the Concept Note, E3/FAB and MI worked closely with Mission staff during a one-week TDY in November 2014 to develop a situation model and use it to define illustrative strategic approaches. MI also drafted results chains for these strategic approaches and identified illustrative indicators to monitor key results and assumptions. These tools helped the Mission design their Biodiversity Conservation Project (BCP) and provided the main components of the results framework and logframe. These building blocks for program design were carried forward to development of the full PAD with continued support from E3/FAB and MI.

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<sup>1</sup> Regional Missions are the South American Regional Mission (SAR) and the Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA).

E3/FAB and MI returned to Madagascar for a second TDY in April 2015 when the Mission requested further assistance in activity design. Using the original situation model and results chain developed for the PAD, MI helped the Mission refine the BCP into two component activities, each with a clear scope. Within each activity, MI facilitated a process to modify the original illustrative strategic approaches and develop results chains that (1) clarified the theories of change behind each strategic approach and (2) illustrated how the two activities would jointly contribute to mitigating threats to biodiversity. In turn, MI helped the Mission adjust the illustrative indicators from the PAD to reflect the monitoring needs of the refined activity results chains.

The situation model and results chains developed during the activity design with MI assistance greatly informed the scope of work for the activities by providing (1) the justification for the strategic approaches, (2) key expected outcomes of each activity, and (3) focused indicators for monitoring, evaluation, and learning. Not only were these tools used to inform the SOW, they were also integral to the RFP more broadly. When released, the RFP will ask bidders to submit a TOC and linked M&E plan as part of their proposal, and successful applicants will be required to use these and other best practices in implementing the Program Cycle to adaptively manage their activity.

E3/FAB and MI work with USAID/Madagascar has been highly valued by the PAD and Activity design team and supported by the Program and Contracting Offices, but the effort met challenges as well. Notably, the lack of a permanently staffed Environment Team made progress with the PAD and Activity design slow and disjointed as staff from other offices and those on TDY came in and out of the process.

Currently, the Mission is still in the process of staffing its Environment Office and finalizing the PAD and the RFP/RFA. Looking ahead to FY16, some priorities for continued E3/FAB and MI engagement with USAID/Madagascar's BCP include:

**Pre-Award:**

1. Continue assistance with developing the TOC/M&E related elements of the activity RFP/RFA
2. Host a webinar for the Contracting Office on the TOC approach and related expectations of bidders in the procurement process
3. Host a webinar during the RFP question/review period for potential bidders on TOC/M&E approach and related aspects of the submission instructions, pending confirmation from the Contracting Office
4. Train TEC in TOC/M&E approach and evaluation criteria for related elements
5. Participate in TEC

**Post-Award:**

6. Facilitate strategic planning workshops with awardees for first year work planning
7. Provide support to developing M&E plans, including evaluation questions, well-defined indicators, and plans for establishing baselines
8. Support Mission Environment staff in monitoring partner implementation
9. Assist in the design of a TOC-based performance evaluation

**PHILIPPINES CASE EXAMPLE:**

**SUPPORTING INTEGRATION OF TOC-BASED MID-TERM PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS**

During FY14, MI provided training and technical assistance for Mission staff and their implementing partners (IPs) to develop SMs and TOCs for two activities, Ecosystems Improved for Sustainable Fisheries (ECOFISH) and Biodiversity and Watersheds Improved for Stronger Economy and Ecosystem Resilience (B+WISER). In FY15, MI provided feedback on the ECOFISH and B+WISER TOCs and performance management plans (PMPs) to prepare for a March workshop to design their mid-term performance evaluations. During the March workshop, MI worked with E3/FAB to help the Mission and IPs to finalize the ECOFISH and B+WISER TOCs and to use the TOCs to identify key assumptions and prioritize evaluation questions. MI provided E3/FAB and the Mission with an annotated outline and sample text for a TOC-based evaluation scope of work (SOW) and, after the workshop, gave extensive comments on the draft mid-term performance evaluation SOWs for both Activities. The final mid-term performance evaluation objectives included:

1. Assess the evaluability of the prioritized learning questions with respect to the practicality and the empirical feasibility of analysis by the end of the life of the project
2. Assess the progress of the project in terms of achieving its key results in the PMP, and analyze the factors and conditions that enhance or diminish the achievement of these results, and the extent to which key results along the theory of change have been achieved
3. Analyze the main challenges in implementing the relevant interventions, and the extent to which the project was able to address these challenges

Post-mid-term performance evaluation award (late July for ECOFISH, early October for B+WISER), MI delivered virtual orientation sessions for the Mission (Program Office evaluation contracting officer's representative [COR] and Activity CORs) and the evaluation contractors on the TOC-based approach to evaluation. In August, MI reviewed and provided recommendations to the Mission on the contractor's inception report for ECOFISH. IR1 met again with the Mission in September to discuss lessons learned from the ECOFISH mid-term performance evaluation initiation process, and these were used to inform the B+WISER mid-term performance evaluation approach.

The Program Office felt the TOC-based approach to the ECOFISH evaluation was valuable and appreciated the participation of the Activity COR and IP in describing the TOC and the evaluation questions to the evaluation team at the initiation of the mid-term performance evaluation process. As a result, the Mission elected to use the same process to initiate the B+WISER evaluation. With MI's technical support, the Program Office has now fully embraced this process for the evaluation of B+WISER, as well as ECOFISH, and has the capacity to design a SOW and contract an evaluation team that utilizes TOCs to systematically assess performance while testing key assumptions that inform learning.

MI met with E3/FAB to update the Philippines work plan for FY16 and has been asked to support the Mission in the following activities:

- Assess the mid-term performance evaluation results for ECOFISH and B+WISER, and apply the lessons to adapting the TOCs, learning questions, indicators, data collection and analysis methods for the remaining life of project (LOP)
- Convene a workshop on using TOCs to review and evaluate performance across OEECC NRM PAD portfolio of Activities (B+WISER, ECOFISH, PhilAm Fund, Partnership for Biodiversity Conservation II)
- Develop a case study documenting the process and lessons learned from using TOCs to design and implement USAID performance evaluations
- Provide technical support to the new Combating Wildlife Crime (CWC) mechanism to develop TOCs as the basis for the annual work plan and M&E plan
- Engage in the Cross Mission Learning Agenda on Conservation Enterprises and CWC

#### **PERU CASE EXAMPLE: USING GEOSPATIAL DATA AND ANALYSIS TO INFORM PROJECT DESIGN AND ME&L PLAN**

One of the first steps in project design is the selection of the thematic and geographic scope. In early 2015, the Peru Mission asked MI and the GeoCenter to help them define the geographic scope for the biodiversity conservation and Sustainable Landscapes components of their Environment PAD. The GeoCenter compiled geospatial data to inform the decision-making process, and MI facilitated a workshop in which the planning team selected their scope and biodiversity focal interests.

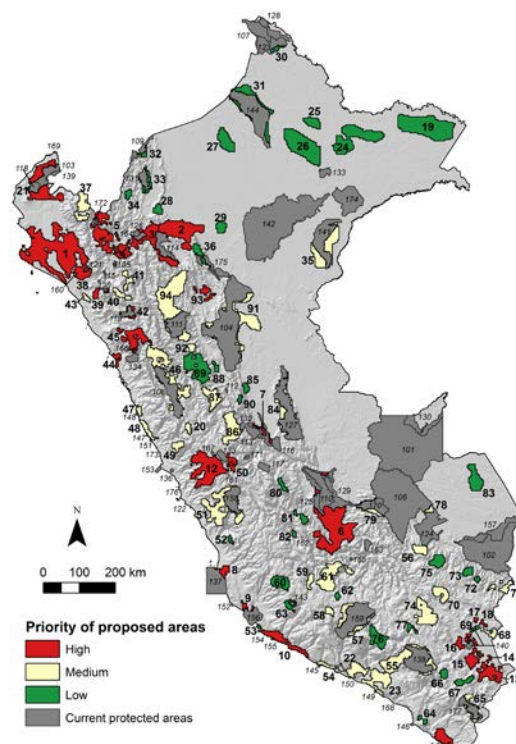
For Sustainable Landscapes, the planning team initially analyzed GIS data on above-ground carbon storage and deforestation from 2009 to 2011 and identified major landscapes where high-carbon areas are

under imminent threat from expanding deforestation. After selecting these landscapes, however, the team decided that it would be best to have a national scope for the mission's SL work. Because deforestation is the largest source of greenhouse gases (GHG) in Peru, it is important to identify the most significant factors contributing to land-based GHG emissions on the national scale, not just for specific landscapes.

For biodiversity conservation, the planning team decided to focus their work in the Peruvian Amazon on a limited set of landscapes. The prioritization of these units within the Peruvian Amazon enables the team to focus work on areas of high priority for biodiversity conservation, thus maximizing conservation impact.

Information about priority areas for biodiversity conservation was gathered from several sources. These sources defined priority areas based on different criteria, but with an overall focus on ecosystem representation, species richness and endemism. By pooling and overlaying this information and data, it was possible to define landscapes with high biodiversity value.<sup>2</sup>

The planning participants then selected a series of additional criteria to prioritize among the high biodiversity value landscapes. The criteria used were mainly institutional and responded to USAID interests and previous agreements and work done by the Peru Mission. The criteria included an overall threat rating, the level of illegal logging in the site, the level of small-scale mining, whether USAID currently supports conservation activities in the landscape, and the level of accessibility of the landscape. These analyses helped identify a final selection of priority biodiversity landscapes where the Peru Mission will focus its efforts.



**Figure 2:** Areas in the Peruvian Amazon identified as high biodiversity

## TWO PRESENTATIONS ON BEST PRACTICES IN THE PROGRAM CYCLE (ACTIVITY 1.4.1)

This deliverable was rescoped in Q3 as two technical write-ups, upon agreement with the COR. Nine emerging best practices were identified based on MI's work across focal Missions. Two topics have been prioritized for the near term: (1) using adaptive management tools (situation models and results chains) to inform procurement for a new activity, and (2) using adaptive management tools to inform third-party evaluations. Two drafts of the technical write-ups were delivered to the IR1 AM in Q4, but final submission of this deliverable was moved to early FY16 in order to divert LOE needed for technical assistance to Indonesia.

### Key Products

- Quarterly Review Session and PowerPoint: Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 (Deliverable 1.1.1.A)
- Cost Benefit Analysis Annual Report (Deliverable 1.1.1.B)
- MI Capacity Building Plan for Best Practices in the Program Cycle (Deliverable 1.2.1.A)
- Two AM Practitioner Virtual Seminars (Deliverable 1.2.1.B)
- AM Training PowerPoints (Deliverable 1.2.1.C)
- Fourteen Mission Site Visits and Observation and Recommendations for each: Brazil, CARPE, Madagascar, Mozambique, Peru, Philippines, SAR, Uganda, and Vietnam (Deliverable 1.3.1)
- Two Draft Technical Write-ups of Best Practices in the Program Cycle (Deliverable 1.4.1)

<sup>2</sup> Fajardo et al. 2014. Combined Use of Systematic Conservation Planning, Species Distribution Modelling, and Connectivity Analysis Reveals Severe Conservation Gaps in a Megadiverse Country (Peru). PLoS One 9.12 (2014): e114367.



## IR2: IMPROVE BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION APPROACHES

During FY15 IR2 designed and launched the Biodiversity Cross-Mission Learning Program (Learning Program), completed extensive work on Combating Wildlife Crime, and explored an online collaborative space for use by the Collaborative Learning Groups (CLGs). Other specific highlights for FY15 included:

- Completing the Conservation Enterprises Brief and presenting the Brief in a webinar to USAID staff
- Finalizing the Framework for the Cross-Mission Learning Program to serve as a roadmap for the Learning Program, and
- Initiating engagement and communication with USAID staff for participation in cross-mission learning groups
- Delivering the Technical Analysis, “Making Use of the Portfolio: Organizational Learning at USAID” and receiving substantial interest from E3/FAB and Bureau for Policy, Planning, and Learning (PPL)
- Collaborating with IR1 on three TDYs to Madagascar, CARPE, and RDMA Missions

The following sections provide progress updates against the approved MI FY15 annual work plan and details regarding IR2 engagement with E3/FAB and key partner offices.

### LAUNCH THE CROSS-MISSION LEARNING PROGRAM AND TRACK MISSION PARTICIPATION IN CROSS-MISSION LEARNING (ACTIVITIES 2.1.1 AND 2.4.1)

The Framework for the Cross-Mission Learning Program (Framework) is a seminal document for IR2 which defines the vision, purpose, outcomes, and products of the Cross-Mission Learning Program and the processes and tools needed to implement it.

A draft of the Framework document was submitted to the IR2 AM in Q1 for review, and the IR2 team incorporated USAID comments in a revised draft submitted to the IR2 Activity Manager on February 19 (Deliverable 2.1.1.A). The current and former IR2 AMs returned comments on the document to MI in early May. Edits were incorporated and MI received AM approval for the final document to E3/FAB on August 4, submitting the Framework for COR approval on August 13.

After finalizing the Roll-Out Strategy for the Cross-Mission Learning Program (Deliverable 2.1.1.B) with E3/FAB in February, the IR2 team provided additional value beyond originally scoped efforts in the work plan by conceptualizing and beginning development of a collaborative online platform for the program. The platform will serve as a repository of information and communications for each CLG. A key envisioned component is a Wiki Knowledge Base where learning and evidence to support each TOC selected for cross-Mission learning will be captured on a continuous basis. MI expects the platform to launch in early FY16.

On March 24, IR2 launched the Learning Program through a webinar focused on using a TOC to synthesize lessons on the effectiveness of conservation enterprises as part of alternative and sustainable livelihoods projects (Deliverable 2.3.1.A). The webinar was attended by 34 participants from seven different countries and Missions, and was jointly facilitated by MI, E3/FAB and ECO. The webinar marked not only the launch of the Learning Program, but also the formation of E3/FAB’s first collaborative learning group - the Conservation Enterprises Learning Group. The group will provide a forum for cross-Mission information and knowledge sharing as well as opportunities to work with MI and other group members to answer learning questions of interest to the group. This webinar was successful in its goal of catalyzing Mission interest and securing their participation in the Learning Group. E3/FAB approved contact with webinar participants to further engage them in the Learning Group.

In Q1, IR2 developed a prototype tool under Data Management Tools and Guidance (Deliverable 2.1.1.C) for CARPE to manage data associated with project assessments and evaluations (and potentially learning); however, changes in priorities for CARPE necessitated a reevaluation of how best to continue development of prototype data management tools for IR2. This led to the decision to develop data-management tools needed to support cross-Mission learning on an ongoing basis as explicit data-management needs are identified. The Wiki Knowledge Base mentioned above is the first of an envisioned suite of data-management tools for the Learning Program.

Additionally, MI continued the use of a Mission Engagement Log (Deliverable 2.4.1) developed in Q1 to track Mission engagement across all of MI. Upon request by E3/FAB, IR2 drafted a memo in lieu of a presentation summarizing Mission engagement throughout the year, and will submit this in October 2016.

### **REPORT MONITORING AND EVALUATION AGENDA PROGRESS (ACTIVITY 2.1.2)**

The 2012 – 2017 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Agenda defines the major activities that E3/FAB identified as priorities toward the goal of “institutionalizing” effective forestry and biodiversity monitoring and evaluation in E3/FAB and priority Missions. The Agenda was originally intended to be dynamic and updated annually throughout the life of MI. However, it was agreed with E3/FAB that a report on the progress made over FY14, as well as activities planned for FY15 for advancing the Agenda, would be of more use than further revisions of the Agenda.

The M&E Agenda Progress Report was submitted and finalized during Q1. MI received positive feedback from the IR2 AM, who noted that the report contained timely, useful information and that others within E3/FAB found it to be a useful summary of MI's work. The Progress Report presents the accomplishments achieved by MI in FY14 and MI's planned work for FY15 in the two programmatic areas: (1) Conducting Evaluations and Summarizing Lessons Learned of Priority E3/FAB Mechanisms and (2) Institutionalizing Effective Forestry and Biodiversity M&E and Learning in E3/FAB and Key Missions

### **COMPLETE CONSERVATION ENTERPRISES SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND DEVELOP CONSERVATION ENTERPRISES LEARNING AGENDA (ACTIVITY 2.2.1 AND 2.3.1)**

In FY14, MI supported E3/FAB in their selection of three conservation strategic approaches as priorities for cross-Mission learning. The first of these to be developed into a cross-Mission learning program is conservation enterprises.

Upon discussions and agreement with the IR2 AM, the Sustainable Livelihoods Summary of Findings was re-scoped as a synthesis of lessons learned from assessments of several past USAID-funded programs that invested in the development of conservation enterprises (Deliverable 2.2.1.A, rescoped as the Conservation Enterprises Brief). During initial thinking for the product, MI expected a systematic review of sustainable livelihoods by International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) to be completed, which would inform the development of MI's summary of findings. However, due to multiple delays in production by IIED (and thus out of MI's control), it was no longer feasible that this document could inform MI's products within the defined production timeline. IR2 and the AM agreed to re-scope the product as a succinct (10-12 page) synthesis of lessons learned from assessments of several past USAID-funded programs that invested in the development of conservation enterprises. Prior review of available USAID documents suggested that development of conservation enterprises was, and is, a common intervention in the biodiversity portfolio. This brief was reviewed by both IR2 AMs, then finalized and approved by the E3/FAB Office Director on March 12 for distribution to the network of Missions.

The IR2 team provided added value to this product by initiating the ongoing development of an annotated bibliography of key papers related to the conservation enterprise TOC being explored by the Conservation Enterprises Learning Group. This bibliography contains brief synopses of the findings from key papers and will be a resource for Learning Group members going forward. It will be made readily accessible to USAID staff in early FY16.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Findings Addendum (Deliverable 2.2.1.B) was removed from the MI FY15 work plan upon agreement with the COR, due to re-scoping of the product to be managed under IR3.

Informed by the Conservation Enterprises brief, IR2 successfully launched the Conservation Enterprises Learning Group on March 24 with nine Missions (Deliverable 2.3.1.A, described above). Following this, the IR2 team used participant interest catalyzed during the launch webinar to engage participants in one-on-one discussions. These discussions aimed to generate explicit learning questions to inform the Conservation Enterprises Learning Agenda (Deliverable 2.3.1.B) by understanding how Mission staff are involved in conservation enterprises, the relevance of the conservation enterprise theory of change to their work, and their specific learning needs. In Q3, IR2 staff conducted nine interviews with staff from six Missions, as well as worked with E3/FAB to identify and contact eight additional staff to request interviews. From the synthesis of these interviews, IR2 developed explicit learning questions to inform the draft

Learning Agenda. This draft Learning Agenda was submitted to the IR2 AM in late September 2015 and presents findings on learning needs and specifies next steps.

### **ANALYZE ENTERPRISE-BASED APPROACHES (ACTIVITY 2.2.2)**

MI hired a consultant, Bernd Cordes, in Q1 FY15 to undertake a follow-up study on a past USAID-supported project, the Biodiversity Conservation Network (BCN) program that was active in the 1990s. The Phase 1 report was submitted to E3/FAB on May 29 (Deliverable 2.2.2.A). This research focused on three main objectives that relate to the BCN's original TOC about linked enterprise-based strategies for conservation, and the BCN's "meta" TOC regarding the utility of learning networks. Each objective has specific research questions and methods and is linked to the needs of MI's cross-Mission learning efforts.

An initial round of web-based research was performed to understand which organizations, individuals, and conservation programs and projects associated with the BCN fifteen years ago are still operating and could potentially be interviewed. MI and E3/FAB staff met with Mr. Cordes on December 16 for a full-day meeting in Washington, D.C. in order to define the goals and objectives of the research project, sketch out primary questions of the study and thus questions for key informants, and determine next steps. Following this, Mr. Cordes interviewed 20 BCN projects and analyzed the information attained. The Phase 1 report summarizes the current status of and contacts for the original BCN projects, the tools and protocols used to conduct interviews and analyze findings, and the results of initial interviews and conclusions of an initial analysis.

Following a meeting with the AMs on May 5, IR2 developed a detailed proposal and budget for Phase 2 research and submitted this for review by internal and external reviewers. Upon review and discussion, the BCN Phase 2 report was re-scoped as a retrospective analysis of conservation enterprise projects supported by USAID, including BCN as well as other projects. This will be delivered in FY16. Further, in FY16, IR2 will explore the development of an evidence piece based on the findings from the Phase 1 report that would be useful to Missions.

### **DEVELOP INDICATORS FOR COMBATING WILDLIFE CRIME (ACTIVITY 2.2.3)**

MI and E3/FAB held a CWC Situation Analysis meeting on December 18 to guide the identification of common strategic approaches for CWC metrics development (Deliverable 2.2.3.A). The objectives of the meeting were to:

1. Reach shared understanding of the process to develop USAID metrics for tracking progress in CWC
2. Finalize a generalized situation model for CWC to serve as the framework for development of USAID metrics and to be available to Missions and Bureaus as they design projects to address wildlife crime
3. Identify and prioritize strategic approaches for CWC for which USAID metrics will be developed

Feedback received during the meeting on the draft CWC situation analysis were used to refine the situation model and develop the list of strategic approaches for metrics development. The final strategic approaches selected are:

- Reduce consumer demand through behavior change methodologies
- Build capacity for effective enforcement and prosecution
- Build a constituency for effective, accountable, and transparent government action
- Support national and sub-national policy and legislative reforms
- Develop and improve use of traceability systems for legal products
- Strengthen international and interagency coordination and cooperation in data sharing and enforcement
- Increase community conservation action and support to combat poaching and trafficking
- Encourage or increase conservation leadership by decision makers
- Improve conservation approaches through better information on wildlife and wildlife crime status and trends
- Expand and reform international laws, policies, and agreements addressing wildlife crime



Following this, MI and E3/FAB agreed that a second meeting was needed for E3/FAB to refine their collective thinking and review draft TOCs developed by IR2 for proposed priority strategic approaches before a draft report could be developed. Consequently, MI and E3/FAB re-scoped deliverable 2.2.3.B as a facilitated discussion rather than as a draft report. This meeting with the E3/FAB CWC working group took place on March 5. During the meeting, E3/FAB identified small groups that would continue working to refine the TOCs.

IR2 then facilitated an E3/FAB-led workshop (Deliverable 2.2.3.C) on March 18 with 32 CWC experts from E3/FAB, other US Government agencies, conservation NGOs, and academia to further refine the TOCs and associated candidate indicators developed by the E3/FAB working groups. The workshop, a significant highlight for IR2, was led by an E3/FAB team led by Mary Rowen. IR2 developed and prepared content for discussion and support materials for the E3/FAB facilitators, presented a brief technical introduction, and provided facilitation support to small groups as they worked. The MI-produced indicator reference report on CWC (Deliverable 3.1.2.B) was distributed to participants and used as a resource during the meeting. Additionally, E3/FAB requested IR2's assistance in a March 19 coordination meeting between US government agencies on a nascent United States Government (USG) wildlife trafficking scorecard.

IR2 worked with USAID to develop and present two webinars in Q3 to engage Missions in the review of draft CWC indicators and associated tools. The first webinar provided an overview of the process undertaken and the situation model underlying major CWC approaches. In the second webinar, which was offered twice to accommodate Mission availability, MI and E3/FAB: (1) answered questions on the process, situation model, and draft report presented in the first webinar; (2) introduced the TOCs used to establish indicators for the seven strategic approaches most commonly implemented at the Mission level; and, (3) described the plan for working with participants in small groups to refine TOCs and indicators. Following the webinars, MI completed ten virtual small group sessions to gain Mission input on TOCs. Effort on CWC represents an integral step in building E3/FAB's capacity beyond the life of MI. E3/FAB was the main driver behind this activity, presenting and leading the workshop with key external CWC experts (Deliverable 2.2.3.C) and leading the discussion in webinars. MI has largely moved into its role as supporting and building capacity in E3/FAB.

The draft report recommending USAID CWC indicators (Deliverable 2.2.3.D) was delivered to E3/FAB on April 17, and included the CWC situation model, TOCs for selected strategic approaches, and candidate indicators for key results of those TOCs. In early Q3, upon agreement with E3/FAB, the product was re-scoped from a document recommending indicators to E3/FAB to a resource or "toolkit" for Missions to guide their selection and application of CWC indicators, and their use of the situation model and TOCs in CWC program development. The re-scoped product, "Measuring Efforts to Combat Wildlife Crime: A Toolkit for Improving Action and Accountability" (Deliverable 2.2.3.E) built upon the core content in Deliverable 2.2.3.D (the draft report) and incorporated significant revisions that emerged from extensive vetting with Missions and E3/FAB. Upon request by E3/FAB, IR2 accelerated production of the toolkit in order to deliver it to Missions in time to inform their annual work planning. The guidance document is currently under final review by the E3/FAB Office Director, and has been shared with select Missions by E3/FAB.

## **COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT (ACTIVITY 2.2.4 AND 2.3.2)**

Progress on the Compliance and Enforcement Summary of Findings (Deliverable 2.2.4) was postponed pending selection by E3/FAB of the second focal area for cross-Mission learning. On July 30, E3/FAB selected Building Capacity for Effective Enforcement and Prosecution in Combating Wildlife Crime as the second focal area.

There appears to be significant Mission interest and engagement in this topic as evidenced by a survey conducted by E3/FAB in Q2 gauging Mission interest in various CWC learning topics, as well as a preliminary search conducted by IR2 of available USAID literature that described Mission programming. Through the effort to develop indicators for CWC (Activity 2.2.3 above), "Building Capacity for Effective Enforcement and Prosecution" was identified by E3/FAB as a common strategic approach across USAID.

IR2 undertook a review and synthesis of USAID literature relevant to this TOC in Q4 to develop a draft summary of findings (Deliverable 2.2.4) which will be built upon in FY16 through a more expanded literature search. This product is currently undergoing internal review.

Development of the Compliance and Enforcement Learning Agenda (Deliverable 2.3.2.A) has been moved to FY16. Additionally, MI's engagement in a CWC Workshop in the South Africa Regional Conference (Deliverable 2.3.2.B) did not occur in FY15.

## **ENGAGE MISSIONS IN GENERATING, SHARING AND USING KNOWLEDGE (ACTIVITY 2.4.2)**

IR2 supported IR1 in several Mission activities, using each opportunity to consider the Cross-Mission Learning Program in context and how best to use the Learning Program to inform Mission needs. In November 2014, the IR2 lead, Tess Present, accompanied the IR1 regional lead, Vinaya Swaminathan, on an E3/FAB-led TDY to Kinshasa in support of CARPE. A joint focus of this trip for both IR1 and IR2 was to develop a data management system to support program progress assessment and potentially cross-landscape learning efforts. Discussions were also held with one of the implementing partners, the World Resources Institute, on possible collaboration in the rollout and ongoing management of the data management system.

IR2 learning specialist Shawn Peabody accompanied E3/FAB and the IR1 regional lead on a TDY to Madagascar in October 2014 to assist with the conceptualization and design of a new Biodiversity PAD. During this trip, Mr. Peabody presented the upcoming IR2 Cross-Mission Learning Program in order to encourage future participation by the Mission, possibly in conjunction with future IR1 support.

Additionally, in August and September 2015, Shawn Peabody and Tess Present supported Arlyne Johnson in virtual and onsite TDY program-design activities in RDMA using the CWC tools developed through Activity 2.2.3.

IR2 also collaborated with IR4 in the conceptualization and design of a workshop in February 2015 that highlighted the possible use of MI's tools for best practices in implementation of the Program Cycle for use in gender integration during project design. The workshop was hosted by the DC Gender Environment Working Group.

## **COMPLETE ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING (ACTIVITY 2.5.1)**

During Q1, MI completed the draft of the Technical Analysis, "Making Use of the Portfolio: Organizational Learning at USAID" (Deliverable 2.5.1). This document summarizes research conducted in order to inform the development of the Learning Program and to guide future investments in learning at USAID.

A first draft of this document was submitted and approved by the IR2 AM in Q1 for solicitation of feedback from key informants who were interviewed as part of the Analysis. Following receipt and incorporation of this feedback, the document was finalized and approved by the E3/FAB Office Director on June 26.

Upon approval and distribution of the paper, the Organizational Learning paper generated significant interest beyond E3/FAB. PPL posted the paper to the Learning Lab site, along with an MI-authored blog post<sup>3</sup>, and IR2 was invited to present the paper to the Knowledge Management Reference Group.

### **Key Products**

- Framework for the Cross-Mission Learning Program (Deliverable 2.1.1.A)
- Components of Roll-Out Strategy with E3/FAB and Online Platform Definition (Deliverable 2.1.1.B and 2.1.1.C)
- 2012-2017 Monitoring and Evaluation Agenda Progress Report (Deliverable 2.1.2)
- Conservation Enterprises Brief (Deliverable 2.2.1.A)
- Phase 1 of BCN Report (Deliverable 2.2.2.A)
- Facilitated Discussion: CWC Situation Analysis and draft situation model (Deliverable 2.2.3.A)
- Working Group Facilitation: CWC TOCs (revised Deliverable 2.2.3.B)
- Facilitated Workshop: CWC TOCs and Indicators (Deliverable 2.2.3.C)

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<sup>3</sup> <http://usaidlearninglab.org/lab-notes/learning-learning-efforts>

- Draft Report recommending USAID CWC indicators (Deliverable 2.2.3.D)
- Measuring Efforts to Combat Wildlife Crime: A Toolkit for Improving Action and Accountability (Deliverable 2.2.3.E), including two webinars to Missions
- Draft Compliance and Enforcement Summary of Findings (Deliverable 2.2.4)
- Webinar on Conservation Enterprises Brief (Deliverable 2.3.1.A)
- Draft Conservation Enterprises Learning Agenda (Deliverable 2.3.1.B)
- Mission Engagement Log and Memo (Deliverable 2.4.1)
- Analysis of Organizational Learning (Deliverable 2.5.1)

## IR3: BUILD THE EVIDENCE BASE

The IR3 team had a productive year in FY15, generating and synthesizing evidence in priority areas including gender and biodiversity governance, food security and nutrition, constituency building, combating wildlife crime, and sustainable livelihoods. Additionally, the Biodiversity and Development Research Agenda (Research Agenda) was finalized in FY15. Specific highlights of the year include:

- Receiving official clearance by the E3/FAB Front Office on the Research Agenda and undertaking several successful dissemination activities that garnered significant interest in the Research Agenda both domestically and internationally
- Working with the Bureau for Food Security and the Food Security Integration Working Group, responding ably to their needs, and receiving positive feedback on nine fisheries country profiles
- Collaborating with TNC to produce a systematic review of how gender influences the management and conservation of biodiversity resources, and producing an evidence-based theory of change from this review
- Partnering with the AMNH to produce compelling research on constituency building, thereby introducing USAID to a valuable new resource and potential partner

The following sections provide progress updates against the approved MI FY15 annual work plan, and details regarding IR3 engagement with E3/FAB and key partner offices over FY15.

### DEVELOP NEW KNOWLEDGE AROUND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS (ACTIVITY 3.1.1)

Deliverables under the Sustainable Livelihoods activity were re-scoped to better align with the IR2 Conservation Enterprise Summary of Findings and to complement the Sustainable Livelihoods Learning Agenda.

Originally, the research paper on information gaps for sustainable livelihoods learning (Deliverable 3.1.1.A) consisted of a literature review on conservation enterprises, but was dropped due to a duplication in effort from an ongoing IIED review. A new research activity, approved by E3/FAB, aimed at contributing new knowledge to improve understanding of the effectiveness of sustainable livelihoods as a conservation intervention by synthesizing findings from World Bank project evaluations.

Early in FY15, IR3 met with IR2 to discuss how the re-scoped product could best complement IR2's work in sustainable livelihoods and meet E3/FAB's needs. The IR3 team then developed a pilot study, finalized in Q2, of twelve randomly selected projects. The results were discussed with E3/FAB and IR2 in Q3, and the team decided to continue with a full synthesis of all World Bank evaluations. IR3 then drafted a product definition, developed a research protocol, and conducted research and analysis. Upon suggestion by the COR, IR3 considered the findings from the recent Initiative for Conservation in the Andean Amazon (ICAA), Phase Two Evaluation in the interpretation of this activity's research results. The research was completed, revised to incorporate comments from IR2, and the report is awaiting final Chief of Party (COP) approval before submission to E3/FAB.

The research implementation strategy (Deliverable 3.1.1.B) was delayed to FY16 with approval from the Activity Manager. The strategy was originally meant to complement the IR2 sustainable livelihoods learning group. However, this learning group has not yet reached the proper stage of development in order to request and use a research implementation strategy. IR3 will support the Conservation Enterprises Learning Group as needed in FY16.

IR3 repurposed LOE originally allocated to support the Compliance and Enforcement Learning Group as no research needs were identified in FY15. The level of effort (LOE) was used to design and implement a new research activity to produce additional knowledge in support of the Conservation Enterprises Learning Group. This new deliverable was developed in Q3 as Deliverable 3.1.1.C: Analysis of the Literature Addressing Behavior Change in Sustainable Livelihood Projects. As part of IIED's systematic review of sustainable livelihoods, IR3 compiled a list of papers reporting behavior change outcomes within sustainable livelihood projects. IR3 then analyzed those publications to extract information with which to test a set of priority questions identified by IR2 around the sustainable livelihoods TOC. The purpose of this analysis is to contribute new knowledge that will improve understanding of the factors that modulate

behavior change in sustainable livelihood projects, based on IIED's comprehensive survey of the literature. This research was completed and moved into internal review in early September 2015.

### **DEVELOP NEW KNOWLEDGE AROUND COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT (ACTIVITY 3.1.2)**

#### **RESEARCH BRIEF: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN ANTI-TRAFFICKING**

In FY15, IR3 worked with E3/FAB to develop a scope of work to identify the conditions under which community engagement is effective in decreasing poaching and trafficking. A contract to implement this activity was awarded to WCS. MI managed the contract with WCS under close consultation with E3/FAB, and modified it when needed to accommodate changes in the work and its timing.

A framing brief delivered to MI by WCS in Q2 outlined the key research hypotheses and provided a conceptual framework that defined the most important conditions and limiting factors for safely engaging communities in activities designed to deter, detect, and detain poachers and traffickers. In collaboration with IR3 and E3/FAB, WCS finalized the interviewee list and interview questionnaire, and conducted interviews in the first three quarters of the year. Additionally, with approval from E3/FAB, MI supported David Wilkie's (WCS) travel to attend an IIED conference in South Africa on community engagement in wildlife trafficking enforcement. During the conference, Dr. Wilkie met with IIED and USAID staff, presented his work for MI, and used conference findings to better inform the development of the framing brief. Dr. Wilkie delivered a presentation on his work on the framing brief on March 16 to E3/FAB and MI. This presentation represented a mid-point check of WCS' and MI's work on this deliverable, and was well-received.

IR3 and WCS worked with Mary Rowen and Diane Russell to develop a final list of case studies for the research brief, and with Barbara Best to develop a case study in the Philippines. All six case studies were completed in Q4. Additionally, IR3 provided support to WCS to develop a literature review to complement their research. Deliverable 3.1.2.A was delivered to E3/FAB in Q4, and final comments were received and incorporated in late September. This product is currently being reviewed and formatted by IR4 before submission for clearance.

MI and WCS held a final presentation and webinar for USAID to present the final results of the research on community engagement in anti-trafficking. This recorded webinar was well received, and MI is working with E3/FAB's Communications and Knowledge Management (CKM) team on the best strategy to package and disseminate this product to a larger audience.

#### **REPORT: METRICS USED IN COMBATING WILDLIFE CRIME**

Based on emerging needs from E3/FAB, IR3 carried out research and analysis around existing indicators used to track wildlife trafficking. An initial SOW, produced following discussions during the FY14 MI Strategic Retreat, formed the basis of the research activity. The SOW was later re-scoped by E3/FAB to modify the research focus and redefine IR3's roles in this activity. An interim report was produced in Q1, and a final report including the updated research objectives was delivered and accepted by E3/FAB on January 29, 2015. The Report on Metrics Used in Combating Wildlife Trafficking (Deliverable 3.1.2.B) was finalized and packaged for dissemination in April, and received final clearance on June 26.

The metrics report includes a list of over 200 indicators used by a variety of actors (government agencies, multilaterals, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions) to track different aspects of wildlife trafficking. It also includes a list of commonly used indicators. Indicators were grouped using categories derived from IR2's Combating Wildlife Trafficking Situation Analysis. This report was successfully used in IR2's March 18<sup>th</sup> Combating Wildlife Trafficking Metrics Workshop.

#### **SUPPORT FOR COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT**

The Literature Review and Research Implementation Strategy for Evidence Gaps in Compliance and Enforcement (Deliverables 3.1.2.C and D) were re-scoped to provide an additional research activity in support of the sustainable livelihoods work, upon agreement with E3/FAB (Deliverable 3.1.1.C).

### **PROVIDE NEW KNOWLEDGE ON INTEGRATION PATHWAYS (ACTIVITY 3.2.1)**



## FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

IR3 worked with the Food Security Integration Working Group in early FY15 to define research topics in order to generate new knowledge on integration, which will provide actionable results informing decision makers in target Bureaus of the value of biodiversity to achieving their own programmatic objectives. The IR3 Activity Manager, E3/FAB's Food Security Integration Working Group, and Bureau for Food Security (BFS) staff, approved a scope of work outlining the IR3 research implementation strategy (Deliverable 3.2.1.A) on January 28. This strategy includes two pillars of work: (1) build the evidence base for the importance of wild fisheries to nutrition and food security in nine selected Feed the Future countries, and (2) produce a BFS briefing book (both of these products will complete Deliverable 3.2.1.B).

Country profiles generated through this research synthesized evidence about the importance of capture fisheries for nutrition and food security, and economic development, as well as key management issues and threats in nine Feed the Future countries: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, and Tanzania. In Q3, IR3 completed all nine profiles and revised them according to E3/FAB's feedback. The profiles were cleared on September 29, 2015. The country profiles are currently under final development with IR4 for packaging and development of a dissemination strategy to reach key audiences such as Agrilinks, the Bureau for Food Security, and Mission staff in Feed the Future countries.

During Q2, IR3 produced an outline of the briefing book, which includes all nine country profiles and will be submitted to BFS in order to engage them in discussions about integrated programming. E3/FAB approved this outline on February 25. In the second half of FY15, IR3 completed a draft of the briefing book, and submitted to Barbara Best for final comments. Comments were received on August 25 and on October 29. MI will conduct additional research to address these comments before finalizing the briefing book for clearance during the first quarter of FY16. The briefing book was professionally laid out and the layout was shared with and approved by E3/FAB.

Finally, as part of the overall activity, IR3 produced a series of hypotheses about wild foods (including fish) and nutrition and food security using data from the Tanzania 2010 Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), and worked with ICF's DHS statistical team to test them. Research for this activity is complete and a draft report for the journal *Public Health Nutrition* will be finalized in Q1 of FY16.

## GENDER

In FY15, IR3 collaborated with TNC on an assessment of existing evidence of how, and under what circumstances, gender influences the management and conservation of biodiversity resources. IR3 worked with the project's partners to establish and agree on expectations, and USAID approved the scope of work for TNC in January 2015. This body of work includes the following products:

1. A systematic mapping review (Deliverable 3.2.1.D) that describes the research question addressed, methodology for conducting the review, and the results of the review. This includes a summary of the quality of evidence and whether existing evidence suggests that the gender composition of forestry and fishery management groups influences the governance and conservation of biodiversity. TNC and collaborators completed the research and a first draft of the manuscript in late July, and completed a second draft on September 29. This paper will be submitted in early October to Environmental Evidence.
2. A policy brief (Deliverable 3.2.1.E) summarizing the results of the research in a clear and practical way for development practitioners, programmers, and policy makers. This brief was developed in tandem with the research paper, and is currently being formatted, laid out, and designed with the IR4 team.

The primary audiences for these products are anticipated to be staff of Missions programming biodiversity funds and the E3/FAB Office.

Finally, MI removed the Gender and Biodiversity Governance Protocol paper (Deliverable 3.2.1.C) from the FY15 work plan, as this product is not funded by MI. The product is complete and informed the development of related MI deliverables. This manuscript was published in the journal *Environmental Evidence*, where it became one of the most highly accessed papers in 2015.

#### **COLLABORATION WITH CIFOR**

IR3 engaged in multiple conversations and meetings with Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) during Q1. The parties discussed three potential areas of collaboration on research: (1) association between deforestation and water turbidity using remote sensing, (2) a cost/benefit analysis of sustainable forest management to provide nutrient-rich wild foods versus micronutrient supplementation programs, and (3) a systematic review on the relationship between freshwater fisheries and forests. IR3 engaged in preliminary research and held meetings and conference calls with E3/FAB and with CIFOR to discuss next steps and USAID needs. In November, IR3 was notified by E3/FAB that these areas of research were no longer a priority for USAID. IR3 notified CIFOR of this and no further action has been taken. Given IR3's new focus on wild foods, fisheries, and food security, there may be opportunities for collaboration with CIFOR in these areas in the future.

### **DESIGN, IMPLEMENT AND FINALIZE RESEARCH ON SPECIAL TOPICS (ACTIVITY 3.3.1)**

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW: CONSTITUENCY BUILDING**

Following approval of the product definition in FY14, IR3 worked with the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation at AMNH to develop a SOW for collaboration on a review of published academic and gray literature on constituency building and stakeholder involvement, to be incorporated into IR2's Compliance and Enforcement Summary of Findings. This SOW was reviewed and approved by AMNH and E3/FAB and incorporated into a contract that was executed January 2, 2015.

IR3 began work with AMNH in Q2 on the literature review. In January, AMNH delivered a systematic review protocol that defines the search's scope, approach, and review protocol, implementation, and synthesis. A bibliographic database of relevant documents was delivered at the beginning of Q3. AMNH delivered the final findings of their review to MI on May 22 (Deliverable 3.3.1). IR3 delivered a webinar with the activity's principal investigator, Eleanor Sterling, on July 8 to discuss findings from the literature review with MI and E3/FAB staff.

IR3 developed a brief based on the review results, which complements the comprehensive technical review paper. The review and brief were revised, finalized, and sent to the IR3 Activity Manager for review on June 25. IR3 received and incorporated comments on the brief, which is currently being reviewed and formatted by IR4. The research report will be formatted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal following final approval from IR3's Activity Manager.

### **FINALIZE BIODIVERSITY AND DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH AGENDA (ACTIVITY 3.4.1)**

IR3 produced the final version of the Research Agenda during the first quarter of FY15 (formerly the Biodiversity and Development Research Framework). Considerable time was spent by IR3 in editing and reviewing the Research Agenda, consolidating and streamlining the Agenda to conform to the language and organization of the Biodiversity Policy, and addressing questions, comments, and edits from USAID's clearance process. This included adding a new section on the impacts of war and conflict on biodiversity conservation. New emphasis was added on indigenous peoples and partnerships with the private sector. The Agenda re-entered USAID clearance and was officially cleared by the E3/FAB Front Office on January 7, 2015 (Deliverable 3.4.1.A). Of note, the Agency's Research Policy was finalized during the same month, allowing MI and E3/FAB to work with staff of the Global Development Lab to promote the Biodiversity and Development Research Agenda as a product aligned with evolving agency policy.

Material from appendices E, F, and G in the original Research Agenda text were merged and submitted to E3/FAB as two standalone documents: Research Methodologies for a Biodiversity and Development Research Framework, and Identifying and Using Evidence (Deliverable 3.4.1.B). The former covers good practices in identifying research questions and hypotheses, and briefly described common research methods. The latter covers the definition of *evidence* and its appropriate use. These documents are currently being revised using feedback gained from the MI COR and discussions during MI's FY15 Strategic Retreat.

IR3 also made significant progress in disseminating the Research Agenda and related products (Deliverable 3.4.1.C). Dissemination activities for the Research Agenda include:

- The IR3 lead, Andres Gomez, met with the USAID Global Development Lab on October 1, when he presented the Research Agenda and discussed potential avenues of collaboration between MI, E3/FAB, and the Lab. The Research Agenda was well-received by Lab staff, who showed interest in the Agenda and contributed to revisions of the Research Agenda text. The two groups discussed a specific proposal to use the Research Agenda themes to guide future PEER mechanism calls for proposals.
- A brief article on the Research Agenda was featured in the March edition of the Poverty, Conservation, and Learning Group newsletter. IIED informed USAID that the story was the most popular piece of the issue, and expressed interest in featuring the Biodiversity Handbook as a featured document in the May edition.
- IR3 worked with E3/FAB to submit an abstract on the Research Agenda for a presentation on January 30 for the 27th International Congress for Conservation Biology (ICCB), and was accepted for a poster presentation to be delivered August 2-6. Additionally, Andres Gomez presented the Research Agenda to an audience of international conservationists at the ICCB.
- IR3 worked with the IR3 AM to prepare and submit an abstract on February 26 to the Ecological Society of America for a panel discussion during their 2015 annual meeting August 9-14. Diane Russell participated in this panel discussion on August 13, and generated significant interest in the Research Agenda.
- The BRDA was launched internally as a companion to the Agency's Research Policy via a webinar with the Global Development Lab on July 16. IR3 assisted the IR3 Activity Manager to prepare content for this USAID launch.

### **DISSEMINATE KEY RESEARCH (ACTIVITY 3.4.2)**

IR3 supported the organization and hosting of a symposium on Ebola risk mapping on May 11 following the global outbreak of the disease. The symposium focused on understanding the conditions associated with the Ebola outbreak and spread, particularly drawing on studies of primates, bats, and bushmeat trade and consumption. E3/FAB and IR3 presented data, maps and models; asked what data gaps exist; and discussed how data can be collected, shared and analyzed in a more integrated manner. The symposium was attended by experts in a variety of fields, including USFWS, Global Health, EcoHealth Alliance, CIFOR, USFS, the CDC, the US Department of Defense, the Global Environment Facility, and USAID staff from the GeoCenter, Lab, DCHA, and E3/FAB.

### **Key Products**

- Draft Research Paper: Information Gaps for Sustainable Livelihoods Learning (Deliverable 3.1.1.A)
- Framing Brief Presentation on Community Engagement in CWT (Deliverable 3.1.2.A)
- Framing Brief on Metrics Used in Combating Wildlife Trafficking (Deliverable 3.1.2.B)
- Research Implementation Strategy for Evidence Gaps in Integration with Nutrition and Food Security (Deliverable 3.2.1.A)
- Nine revised country profiles for Food Security and Nutrition Research product (Deliverable 3.2.1.B)
- Draft Gender and Biodiversity Governance Research Paper (Deliverable 3.2.1.D)
- Draft Gender and Biodiversity Governance Policy Briefs (Deliverable 3.2.1.E)
- Research paper on Constituency Building for Biodiversity Conservation (Deliverable 3.3.1)
- Draft manuscript of Gender and Biodiversity Governance Protocol Paper (Deliverable 3.2.1.C)
- Final Research Agenda (Deliverable 3.4.1.A)
- Two Standalone Products from the Research Agenda – “Identifying and Using Evidence” and “Research Questions and Methodologies for a Biodiversity and Development Research Agenda” (Deliverable 3.4.1.B)
- Research Agenda Dissemination Meetings and Activities (Deliverable 3.4.1.C)



## IR4: SYNTHESIS AND OUTREACH

IR4 produced several foundational products in FY15 that include three Biodiversity How-To Guides, the MLA Framework, and training modules to support biodiversity programming. IR4 also spearheaded MI's outreach efforts, working with PPL and other E3 offices to develop joint products and build support for the approaches that E3/FAB is developing through MI. IR4 production early in the year was hindered by the need to fill vacant positions. Two key positions, Senior Synthesis and Outreach Officer and Adaptive Management Specialist, were filled during the last half of FY15. Other specific highlights for FY15 for IR4 include:

- Providing extensive technical effort in supporting the three Biodiversity How-To Guides to support the use of situation models, theories of change, and monitoring and evaluation
- Effective collaboration with the PPL Bureau to ensure alignment of MI products and trainings with USAID policies and procedures, including initiation of a strong working relationship with the CLA mechanism, Organizational Learning and Knowledge Management (LEARN).
- Completing numerous intensive trainings on adaptive management and Miradi to E3/FAB, E3/Global Climate Change (GCC), PPL, Regional Bureaus, and Mission staff
- Finalizing the Sustainable Conservation Approaches in Priority Ecosystems (SCAPES) Evaluation
- Conducting a successful non-environment Miradi pilot with Uganda Mission staff

The following sections provide progress updates against the approved MI FY15 annual work plan and details regarding IR4 engagement with E3/FAB and key partner offices.

### DEVELOP FRAMEWORK FOR MAINSTREAMING LEARNING AND ADAPTING (ACTIVITY 4.1.1)

At the MI Strategic Planning Retreat in September 2014, E3/FAB and MI agreed to develop a framework for mainstreaming learning and adapting within the biodiversity portfolio at USAID. The purpose of the Framework is to lay out a set of core competencies, best practices, and business processes that MI has identified as necessary to mainstream adaptive management and best practices in implementing the Program Cycle for biodiversity and integrated programming. It is based on the Agency's policy requirements, primarily as described in the ADS, Biodiversity Policy, Program Cycle, Evaluation Policy, Standardized Mission Orders, and draws from *The Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation*. Using the four enabling conditions that E3/FAB and MI have identified as essential to mainstreaming learning and adapting (capacity; knowledge, tools, and guidance; business processes and systems; and culture), the Framework notes relevant applications and entry points in the USAID context. The Framework will help MI management and Activity Managers assess progress toward the life of project objective: *evidence-based adaptive management mainstreamed within USAID*. Beyond the life of MI, the Framework will help Missions and E3/FAB agree on a common conceptual framework for adaptive management, and assess USAID staff capacity to apply MI's AM tools, guidance, and best practices to improve the effectiveness of future biodiversity programming.

In Q1 FY15, an internal Mainstreaming Learning and Adapting Working Group that consists of the IR leads, IR4 staff, and MI technical advisors was convened to initiate work on the draft Framework. The draft Framework was presented during the MI Monthly Meeting on May 28 to E3/FAB Activity Managers for their initial feedback and input. Based on input from the meeting, IR4 modified the Framework design in order to better ground the document in the Program Cycle, Biodiversity Policy, and Biodiversity Handbook. In Q4, IR4 developed and shared with E3/FAB a draft plan to communicate key elements of the Framework.

### BUILD CAPACITY THROUGH TRAINING (ACTIVITY 4.2.1)

As part of the cross-IR coordination effort, IR4 provided content and feedback for the MI Capacity Building Plan (Deliverable 1.2.1.A) and further refined product scopes and schedules for adaptive management training and training materials with input from the IR1 team and the IR4 Activity Manager. The IR4 Lead also met with the E3/FAB Training Coordinator several times during FY15 to ensure that the MI capacity

building effort is well-aligned and complementary to E3/FAB's larger training and capacity building strategy. Achievements under specific activity deliverables follow.

#### DC-BASED TRAINING SESSIONS

Adaptive management capacity building through training continued under IR4 throughout FY15. Details of trainings are found in the table below:

*Table 1: DC-based Training Sessions*

Date	Audience	Description
<b>Jan 15, Feb 4, Feb 18 (2 sessions)</b>	E3/GCC, USAID	IR4 responded to a support request from E3/GCC, a key institutional partner, for the development of an integrated design for USAID Sustainable Landscapes programs. MI facilitated four working sessions with staff of the Office of Global Climate Change, ultimately developing a situation model and several results chains, including one for the Tropical Forest Alliance, to describe USAID's strategic approach to Sustainable Landscapes programming. E3/GCC staff had been introduced to the work of MI during a set of workshops in late FY14; the work during Q1 built on that foundation and increased the capacity of this partner office to apply best practices in implementing the Program Cycle to integrated programs. Five staff members were trained in these practices and the use of Miradi software to support them.
<b>January 8</b>	State Department, NOAA, USAID	MI facilitated two working sessions with E3/FAB Office staff to develop a situation model to inform USAID's engagement in the Presidential Task Force on Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and Seafood Fraud. The situation model mapped US Government engagement in the issue across multiple agencies, including USAID. The second of these sessions was a workshop, which included a training element, for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and State Department staff to consider and refine this situation model. As a product of the sessions, participants developed a situation model for IUU Fishing. Later in the quarter, IR2 staff worked with E3/FAB to develop TOCs associated with that situation model.
<b>January 12</b>	State Department, NOAA, USAID	
<b>January 23</b>	Terry Brown and PPL/SPP	MI gave a training to staff of PPL's Strategic Planning and Policy Office. Nick Salafsky of FOS introduced Miradi Adaptive Management Software as well as the associated tools that help USAID staff use best practices in implementing the Program Cycle: (1) situation models, (2) TOCs and results chains, and (3) TOC-based M&E design and indicator selection. The meeting was well received by PPL Strategic Planning and Programming (SPP) staff, who found the tools to be useful and reported that they are a sound complement to logical frameworks (logframes), filling gaps to support systems thinking throughout the design and planning process, and ensuring strong linkages to implementation, learning, and adapting.
<b>February 19</b>	PPL/LER	MI held a second training workshop covering the use of results chains to express a project's TOC and guide the selection of indicators to assess progress along that TOC. This training workshop was requested by and delivered to PPL's Learning, Evaluation, and Research (LER) staff to help inform their considerations of updates to the Agency's M&E guidance. As a result of this training and the prior meeting on January 23 <sup>rd</sup> , MI and PPL/LER discussed possible revisions to ADS 201-203 chapters to include results chains as a standard tool for articulating TOCs, and to link indicator selection to the project TOC.

This IR4 effort complements IR1's capacity building work to enhance core competencies at focal Missions; the IR4 focus is on training USAID Washington (USAID/W) counterparts that serve as Advisors and Enablers for Mission-based programs.<sup>4</sup> The training opportunities described above were identified and delivered in collaboration with E3/FAB.

#### **"LEGACY" TRAINING MATERIALS**

The "Legacy" Training Materials (Deliverable 4.2.1.B) was developed to support the needs of E3/FAB in providing technical assistance in program design, monitoring, evaluation, and learning to staff of Missions that program or co-program biodiversity funds. These "Legacy" materials are based on core technical content developed by MI to support best practices in implementing the Program Cycle and are repackaged and tailored for additional audiences and specific uses during and beyond the life of MI. Over the life of MI, the suite of legacy materials that will be developed will include PowerPoint presentations, recorded video presentations, informative handouts, video tutorials, packets to guide breakout sessions for moderated project designs, facilitators' tips, example projects from MI's technical assistance for Missions, and generic theories of change and situation models for priority topics for use in in-person trainings and to support virtual trainings.

The production of these training materials was dependent on the completion of the guidance documents in Activities 4.3.1 and 4.3.2. These foundational materials support the long-term development of the legacy training materials and were produced this fiscal year, while the legacy materials themselves have been moved to FY16 and FY17.

#### **TRAINING MATERIALS FOR ENVIRONMENT OFFICER TRAINING**

IR4 provided extensive technical support and coordinated with E3/FAB and ECO to define training modules for inclusion in E3/FAB's new training strategy and program for Environment Officers (Deliverable 4.2.1.C). In FY15, MI developed six training modules with the module stewards on use of situation models, theories of change, and monitoring, evaluation, and learning. These modules complement the core materials that IR1 uses to provide technical assistance to Missions (1.2.1.C) and the IR4-produced guidance documents on situation models, theories of change, and TOC-based monitoring and evaluation and indicator selection.

MI staff participated in a half-day strategy meeting with the E3/FAB Training Working Group on February 18, 2015 and a follow-up work session with ECO on March 19, resulting in coordinated inputs from ECO and MI on E3/FAB's target audiences and corresponding core competencies. Additionally, IR4 participated in the planning of a June 1 E3/FAB workshop, facilitated by ECO, on planning the training program for Environment Officers. This included technical input to the set of knowledge, skills, abilities, and learning pathways that will be the foundation for the training program; refining key audiences; and developing a workshop agenda. MI staff facilitated breakout discussions and participated in module planning work groups during the June 1 workshop. Throughout Q3, MI coordinated extensively with ECO and the E3/FAB Communications, Knowledge Management, and Training team to identify needs in developing biodiversity training courses for Environment Officers.

IR4 delivered technical content for six modules to the E3/FAB training coordinator, Heidi Schuttenberg, in Q4. Specifically, IR4 supplied learning objectives and core materials for ECO to synthesize into the final E3/FAB training module template. These training modules will be utilized during Environment Officer trainings in FY16.

#### **COMPLETE MIRADI PILOT (ACTIVITY 4.2.2)**

The USAID pilot of Miradi Adaptive Management Software was conducted over the first half of FY15. The pilot was approved for implementation at four MI focal Missions: Indonesia, Philippines, Uganda, and the South America Regional Program Office (SAR). Operating units at USAID/Washington (E3/FAB, PPL, Global Development Lab) were also approved for the pilot. Additional licenses and approval for participation in the pilot were provided to E3/GCC in December, after the IR4 engagement for the development of integrated designs for Sustainable Landscapes (Deliverable 4.2.1.A). On June 9, the E3/FAB Office obtained approval from PPL for Miradi's use across biodiversity programs globally. The approval of Miradi

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<sup>4</sup> MI Capacity Building Plan includes definitions of Advisors and Enablers

followed the successful completion of the pilot with several of the approved operating units, as well as positive feedback from USAID staff

To better inform the capacity building and training plans for the Miradi pilot, IR4 completed a Miradi Needs Assessment during Q1 and delivered the accompanying progress report in Q2 (Deliverable 4.2.2.A). MI delivered a presentation on the Miradi Needs Assessment and Progress Report (Deliverable 4.2.2.A) to Activity Managers during the MI-E3/FAB monthly meeting in January 2015. The results of the assessment informed next steps and the closeout of the pilot, including development of a final report with Mission feedback and recommendations. IR4 and IR1 collaborated closely on Mission engagement, Miradi software training plans, and the development of Miradi super-users at pilot Missions and E3/FAB. During FY16 MI will develop and execute the strategy for introducing Miradi to all missions that program biodiversity funds and will deliver the set of Miradi support materials needed by USAID users.

In Q3 and Q4, MI drafted the Miradi Pilot Final Report (Deliverable 4.2.2.D), which is currently under final internal review. Pilot tests at focal Missions and E3/FAB, pilot environment, and non-environment test results, as well as lessons learned synthesized from pilot results and USAID staff feedback, informed the final report. IR4 staff solicited and received feedback from pilot Missions on the training, inquiring about sufficiency, usefulness, function, and utilization. The final Miradi Report will inform activities and products in FY16 related to the full-scale rollout approved by PPL in FY15.

#### **MIRADI TRAINING SESSIONS**

MI staff completed extensive training sessions in FY15 related to the pilot (Deliverable 4.2.2.B). Training was provided to E3/FAB, E3/GCC, PPL, the Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs, and Mission staff in Peru, Uganda, SAR, Brazil, and Colombia. These trainings included learning objectives for using Miradi to apply best practices in implementing the Program Cycle, as well as how to use Miradi to generate key Program Cycle Units such as situation models, results chains depicting theories of change, and monitoring, evaluation, and learning plans. Trainings completed in FY15 are detailed below:

- November 17, December 1, and December 3: Delivered three DC-based Miradi training sessions for E3/FAB and PPL staff.
- November 17 and 20: Provided a tailored training for Miradi and its use in developing theories of change to Jackie Greene of PPL.
- December 9: Delivered Miradi training and technical assistance for E3/GCC Sustainable Landscapes staff
- February 23: MI staff trained SAR staff in Miradi applications as part of TA delivered through IR1 during a TDY to Peru
- March 23-25: MI and E3/FAB delivered a non-environment pilot of the approaches used in MI and Miradi software in Uganda for Feed the Future staff (Deliverable 4.6.1.A).
- March 31: To prepare for a Madagascar TDY, Cristy Garris held a one-on-one Miradi training session with Catherine Workman of E3/FAB. Cristy assisted Catherine with installing Miradi and how to use key features of the software.
- May 7 and June 11: Two virtual training sessions were provided to Margaret Harritt of the Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs.
- July 9, July 16, and August 3: MI staff provided Superuser trainings for the Peru Environment Office. These superuser trainings provide an in-depth training for Miradi such that the superuser is able to train other users.
- August 10: Virtual training to the SAR, Peru, Brazil, and Colombia Missions on software introduction, situation analysis, theories of change, M&E design, planning, and reporting.

#### **MIRADI TRAINING MATERIALS**

IR4 developed four PowerPoint presentations (Deliverable 4.2.2.C) through FY15: (1) installing Miradi and the USAID language pack, (2) introduction to Miradi's basic features, (3) how to develop a situation model using Miradi, and (4) how to develop a results chains and M&E plans using Miradi. These presentations were updated following the Miradi pilots, and will be delivered with other Miradi support materials (voiceover tutorials, short written guidance) during FY16.

## **FINALIZE GUIDES FOR SITUATION ANALYSIS, THEORIES OF CHANGE, AND MONITORING (ACTIVITY 4.3.1)**

Through FY15, IR4 staff expended significant effort in drafting, revising, and incorporating feedback into the three Biodiversity How-To Guides<sup>5</sup> to support use of situation models, results chains, indicator and outcome selection, and the development of results chain based M&E plans for USAID staff implementing the Program Cycle for biodiversity and integrated programming. The final approval process for all three documents was coordinated to ensure that the documents flow logically, consistently use terms and examples, and, taken together, form a sound conceptual foundation for developing best practices in implementing the Program Cycle for projects and activities with biodiversity funds. MI and E3/FAB held many coordination meetings with PPL/SPP throughout the scoping and drafting process to ensure that each Biodiversity How-To Guide would be consistent with PPL guidance and expectations. All three guides were submitted to PPL for comments, which were subsequently addressed and incorporated. All three guides were circulated for E3/FAB Office-wide review during July 2015. Comments were addressed during Q4 FY15.

The **situation analysis** guide (Deliverable 4.3.1.A), was prepared to near-final form in October, 2014 and was updated later in the year to align with the TOC and monitoring and evaluation guides. Final E3/FAB review and approval of the situation model guidance was on hold while the other two Biodiversity How-To Guides were developed. IR4 submitted the revised guide to E3/FAB for review on June 30, received comments, and submitted a final draft on September 2.

The **results chain** guide (Deliverable 4.3.1.B) draft was developed and reviewed by the IR4 Activity Manager in Q1. IR4 delivered the TOC guide to PPL in mid-January for review. MI received PPL comments in mid-March, held a meeting and a follow up call to discuss feedback and next steps, and began incorporating PPL's comments in March. The theories of change guide underwent several rounds of review with the IR4 Activity Manager in the second half of the year. A near-final draft was submitted to the Activity Manager on September 3.

The **monitoring, evaluation, and learning** guide product definition was completed and approved by the IR4 AM in January. The guide (Deliverable 4.3.1.C) was drafted and revised with the IR4 Activity Manager before being submitted to PPL for comments in Q3. This guide represents a significant effort by the IR4 Activity Manager and MI to align to the strong body of existing agency guidance on M&E, to glean emerging concepts on CLA, and to link concepts of monitoring, evaluation, and learning to program design. The draft guide was submitted to all E3/FAB staff for review on June 30. MI addressed comments and delivered a near-final version on September 19.

Following final approval, IR4 will initiate final formatting, layout, and packaging for the final deliverables. In tandem with the development of the guides, IR4 and IR1 prepared companion PowerPoint presentations (Deliverable 1.2.1.C) to support roll out of the guides to USAID staff through MI TA and other FAB TDYs.

## **DEVELOP COMPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS (ACTIVITY 4.3.2)**

Upon completion of the three Biodiversity How-To Guides listed above, MI may develop additional guidance documents to support the use of best practices in implementing the Program Cycle in USAID biodiversity programs. Due to delays in finalizing the first three guides, production of the complementary guidance documents has been moved to FY16. Proposed topics for the complementary guidance were socialized at the MI-FAB FY15 Strategic Planning Retreat. Priority topics will be selected and prioritized for development as part of the FY16 work planning process.

In April 2015, E3/FAB identified the need for an indicator reference resource that will serve as the first of these complementary guidance documents. MI submitted a draft product concept for this document to the Activity Managers on May 15 2015. The Activity Managers provided initial feedback and advised that the full product should be developed in FY16 following completion of the first set of guidance documents.

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<sup>5</sup> The three Biodiversity How-To Guides include: (1) Developing a Situation Model for USAID Biodiversity Programming, (2) Using Results Chains to Depict Theories of Change in USAID Biodiversity Programming, and (3) Defining Outcomes and Indicators for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning in Biodiversity Programming.



The planned reference resource will help USAID staff define appropriate indicators for selected strategic approaches, including progress towards threat reduction and conservation of biodiversity targets, by having access to a set of relevant, feasible, and informative indicators. It is anticipated that the proposed product will include generic theories of change that are commonly used in USAID biodiversity programs; example indicators for those TOCs with clear data specifications (i.e., performance indicator reference sheets [PIRS]); and generic outcomes, indicators, and data specifications for threats and focal interests common to the TOCs under consideration.

### **PRODUCE AND PACKAGE NEW KNOWLEDGE (ACTIVITY 4.3.3)**

During FY15, IR4 developed new communications products, as well as supported the final production of technical products of IRs 1-3 by performing copyediting, formatting, and 508-compliance work on numerous deliverables.

IR4 developed a flyer about the Biodiversity Handbook and Biodiversity and Development Research Agenda for the World Parks Congress. The flyer for the Research Agenda and Handbook was produced to introduce USAID stakeholders to these two new products that support implementation of the Biodiversity Policy and use of evidence in USAID biodiversity programming. The flyer was designed, approved by E3/FAB, and 200 copies were delivered to participants in the World Parks Congress.

IR4 and the IR4 AM made final edits and design adjustments to the MI handout, which was approved for distribution early in Q2 FY15. The handout has been used in Washington and Missions to introduce partners and stakeholders to the work of MI and to provide a means for obtaining additional information.

### **CLIMATE CASE STUDIES**

MI developed two case studies that examine integration of biodiversity programs with climate change programs in the USAID context (Deliverable 4.3.3.C). In line with USAID's Climate Change and Development Strategy (2012-2016), one case study on Nepal focuses on climate adaptation, and a second case study on Peru focuses on sustainable landscapes. These case studies build upon the existing library of climate adaptation case studies compiled by E3/GCC for use by Mission and USAID/W staff, who need sound examples of project designs that integrate climate change adaptation and biodiversity considerations<sup>6</sup>.

In Q2, IR4 submitted a climate case study product definition to E3/FAB and E3/GCC for review, as well as an outline of the Nepal adaptation case study to the IR2 Activity Manager. During Q3, MI delivered an advanced draft of the Nepal adaptation case study to the E3/FAB Activity Manager and received comments. Both case studies were under internal MI review and will be submitted to E3/FAB in early FY16.

The Reflection Session with E3/GCC (Deliverable 4.6.1.C) has been moved to FY16 and removed from the FY15 work plan, due to the need to complete the case studies in FY15.

### **SCAPES**

Significant support was provided by MI in the finalization of the SCAPES final evaluation report and a successful SCAPES closeout event (Deliverable 4.3.3.D).

Late in the fourth quarter of FY14 the two SCAPES evaluators delivered a draft report of the evaluation to MI. During Q1 FY15 MI used internal staff and limited LOE of the Senior Evaluator to improve the presentation of the report's findings. This included editing the document from 250 pages to 100 pages, incorporating two rounds of USAID comments, honing the list of Annexes included in the document, coordinating with Environmental Communication, Learning, and Outreach on production of complementary materials for the SCAPES close-out, preparing a 15-page Executive Summary, and professional layout of the full report and Executive Summary.

The executive summary was completed, including copyediting, formatting, layout, design, and 508-compliance, in February and was posted to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC). USAID held a well-received SCAPES closeout event on February 19 with presentation assistance, report

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<sup>6</sup> [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00KKNX.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00KKNX.pdf)

printing, and coordination support from MI. The final report was approved by the USAID COR, made 508-compliant, and posted onto the DEC. Finally, MI worked with E3/FAB to develop printed copies of the report.

#### **CURATE LIBRARY OF BEST PRACTICES (ACTIVITY 4.4.1)**

The *Library of Best Practices in the Program Cycle and Other Resources* serves as a reference for USAID staff who provide support to Missions to implement best practices in the Program Cycle. The Library aligns conceptually with the major topic areas of the MLA Framework (Activity 4.1.1) and USAID Program Cycle and is organized around tasks likely to be undertaken by E3/FAB staff as they provide assistance to Missions programming biodiversity funds. It contains curated materials generated by MI's work with Missions to serve as case examples. The Library, put into operation in Q4, will be continuously updated over the life of MI (Deliverable 4.4.1).

Production began in Q1 on the design of the Library for Best Practices and Other Resources. IR4 conducted internal cross-IR coordination meetings to refine the layout, data quality standards, curation protocols, roles and responsibilities based on feedback from E3/FAB and the needs of key audiences for the Document Library. IR4 presented a beta version of the Library to the MI COR on March 20 and then to the E3/FAB MI POCs at their quarterly meeting on March 26.

IR4 staff identified a potential long-term host site for the curated Library on the Natural Resources and Development (RM) Portal and the Learning Lab. Currently, the Library is designed as a Google site protected by approved access. It has been designed with a simple, straightforward interface to facilitate ease of use in the field and Washington as well as ease of transfer once the Library is moved to the RM Portal. IR4 staff have also developed a checklist and curating protocol defining how documents and resources will be added to the Library and how to manage sensitive but unclassified (SBU) materials appropriately.

#### **GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS OUTREACH: NEWSLETTER AND LEARNING GROUPS (ACTIVITY 4.4.3)**

Given the delays in hiring a MI Communications Officer this FY, MI will implement this activity during FY16 and has removed this activity and product from the FY15 work plan.

#### **IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO REACH NON-FOCAL MISSIONS (ACTIVITY 4.5.1)**

The IR4 Activity Manager gave two internal presentations that contributed to extending the reach of MI to non-focal Missions: one to the Asia Bureau in October 2014, and a second to the Local Systems Framework Working Group on January 29 2015. MI prepared drafts of the slide decks that were delivered on both occasions. On July 22 2015 MI staff and the IR4 Activity Manager briefed the USAID Water Office on MI approaches.

Staff of the USAID Office of Global Climate Change delivered a briefing on MI approaches at a meeting in the Dominican Republic during the third quarter of FY15. The COR delivered an update on MI activities, using an MI-prepared slide deck, to the Southern Africa Regional Office on September 14 2015. MI's COP provided an extensive overview of MI activities to staff of the BRIDGE mechanism on September 14 2015.

#### **COLLABORATE WITH PPL, E3/GCC, AND GENDER OFFICE (ACTIVITY 4.6.1)**

##### **PPL**

In FY14, PPL requested that MI and E3/FAB explore the applicability of some of the approaches that MI is using to support best practices in programs with biodiversity funds to a program outside of the environment sector. In late March, MI and E3/FAB collaborated to deliver technical assistance to a Feed the Future program in Uganda. That program faced a challenge that MI has encountered in several of its focal Missions: a set of mechanisms developed to implement a PAD that needed to engage in cross-mechanism monitoring, evaluation, and learning, yet lacked the systems and tools to effectively coordinate monitoring and learning. Working with specialists in the Facilitation Approach, IR4 staff and the IR4 Activity Manager facilitated a three-day workshop with staff of the Mission and the implementing partners to (1) validate a situation model that mapped the network of stakeholders and challenges, (2) develop TOCs aligned with

the core elements of the three major mechanisms, and (3) start to identify key results, outcomes, and indicators to facilitate cross-project monitoring and learning. The design of the workshop was informed by several planning meetings and phone calls that included Mission staff, specialists in the Facilitation Approach, Feed the Future M&E staff, and PPL/SPP staff.

The pilot was successful and generated valuable observations from the field, with MI staff providing daily dispatches during the pilot period to E3/FAB and PPL points of contact. MI presented a written report and results of the workshop (Deliverable 4.6.1.A) to PPL and E3/FAB during a debriefing on April 1. Documents delivered include the Non-Environment Pilot Presentation, the TOC (Miradi file) produced by workshop participants, and a summary Excel file of feedback from participants in the March 23-25 workshop in Uganda. Moving forward, the results of this pilot will inform IR4's strategy in working with BRIDGE on integration activities in FY16, as well as strategies for using Miradi for integrated programming.

### **E3/GCC**

IR4 staff facilitated four working sessions with staff of E3/GCC/Sustainable Landscapes in the beginning of FY15, to assist in the development of their strategy as described in Activity 4.2.1 (Deliverable 4.6.1.B), as well as the identification of two case studies. These case studies are described under Activity 4.3.3.

### **GENDER**

The IR4 Lead met with the Biodiversity and Gender Working Group during December 2014 to discuss E3's plans and priorities for improving the integration of gender into USAID biodiversity programs. The meeting resulted in identification of needed products – some of which MI will contribute to developing – as well as existing resources that can be curated for more effective use within USAID.

IR4 and IR2 staff collaborated on the development of a half-day workshop designed as an introduction to methods for integrating gender into project design using the adaptive management tools and guidance being advanced through MI for USAID's biodiversity programming. This workshop was co-facilitated by MI at the DC-based Gender Working Group meeting in February, and served as an outreach opportunity for several DC-based external partners of E3/FAB. The IR3 Activity Manager is an active participant in that group, and MI discussed with members of the group potential case studies and lessons learned by implementing partners in integrating gender effectively with biodiversity programs.

### **LIAISE WITH REGIONAL BUREAUS (ACTIVITY 4.7.1)**

Regional Bureau and PPL briefings through the year are intended to keep key staff informed of their Missions' work with MI and its alignment to the Agency's needs and priorities. Key meetings and outcomes include:

- MI provided support to the IR4 Activity Manager in preparing a successful presentation to the Asia Bureau on October 30, 2014. The presentation was well attended and helped Asia Bureau staff better understand MI's work with Missions in Asia. PPL attended this meeting and conveyed findings of their work with MI.
- MI provided a presentation on January 15 to PPL on the work in focal Missions to apply a TOC-based approach that aligns with collaborating, learning, and adapting principles. This included an update on the Miradi pilot that had been authorized by PPL during FY14. The presentation was well-received: attendees suggested making Miradi and associated concepts a standard tool for Missions, prompting MI and the IR4 Activity Manager to draft a memo requesting that expansion of the Miradi use approval (see Activity 4.2.2 above).
- MI staff provided support to the IR4 Activity Manager for a presentation given on January 29 to the PPL Local Systems Framework. Feedback on the presentation was very favorable.
- MI staff met with E3/FAB, PPL/SPP, and PPL/LER staff on February 19 to discuss the interaction between TOCs, monitoring frameworks, and indicator and outcome selection, and how this process measures progress along the TOC. PPL is currently in the process of updating the ADS and is considering how to update its indicator selection guidance. PPL/LER staff requested this discussion to better understand how MI is using this approach in focal Missions.



- The MI COP met with senior management of the LEARN mechanism on February 12 to understand priorities and planned products, and to identify areas of overlap or opportunities for cooperation between MI and LEARN. A follow-up meeting on March 25 between IR2 staff, LEARN staff, and the IR2 Activity Manager was held to consider how MI could work with the Learning Lab and how, in turn, LEARN could support the cross-Mission Learning Program. The LEARN Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) attended the MI retreat in September to further discuss ways that MI and LEARN could work together effectively.
- The MI COP provided technical support to a debrief with the Water Office on July 22. This debrief was delivered by the IR4 AM and used examples from MI's work with CARPE and Feed the Future. This generated positive interest in MI's work; the Water Office was particularly interested in MI's practice of "meeting the Mission where they are" and in indicator development.

## Key Products

- Framework for Mainstreaming Learning and Adapting (Deliverable 4.1.1)
- Eight DC-based training sessions (Deliverable 4.2.1.A)
- Support to June 1 E3/FAB Environment Officer Training Workshop (Deliverable 4.2.1.C)
- Six draft Environment Officer Training Modules (Deliverable 4.2.1.C)
- Miradi Needs Assessment and Progress Report (Deliverable 4.2.2.A)
- Fifteen Miradi Training Sessions (Deliverable 4.2.2.B)
- Four draft PowerPoint training presentations on Miradi (Deliverable 4.2.2.C)
- Final Report: Miradi Pilot (Deliverable 4.2.2.D)
- Situation Model Guidance How-To Guide (Deliverable 4.3.1.A)
- Theories of Change Guidance How-To Guide (Deliverable 4.3.1.B)
- Monitoring and Evaluation Guidance How-To Guide (Deliverable 4.3.1.C)
- Synthesis of Findings Communication Product for Conservation Enterprises/Sustainable Livelihoods (Deliverable 4.3.3.A)
- Flyer for Biodiversity Handbook and Research Agenda (Deliverable 4.3.3.D)
- SCAPES Evaluation Executive Summary and Final Report (Deliverable 4.3.3.D)
- MI Overview Handout (Deliverable 4.3.3.D)
- Presentation: Constituency Building for Biodiversity Conservation (Deliverable 4.3.3.D)
- Document Library (Deliverable 4.4.1)
- Presentation: Non-Environment Pilot (Deliverable 4.6.1.A)
- Four Facilitated Working Sessions of Sustainable Landscapes Strategy (Deliverable 4.6.1.B)
- Regional and PPL Bureau Briefings (Deliverable 4.7.1.B)

## IR0: PROJECT MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION

MI made notable progress in its work and demonstrated efficiency improvements compared to previous years during FY15. Highlights from this year include:

- Finalizing the FY15 work plan and budget in early December, a significant improvement over previous years.
- Hiring a Learning Technical specialist for the IR2 Team, an Adaptive Management specialist for the IR1-4 Teams, a Project Coordinator for the IR0 team, and a Senior Communications Specialist for the IR4 team.
- Developing and maintaining a product tracking tool for work plan deliverables and progress.
- Conducting a successful Strategic Planning Retreat in Front Royal, Virginia for FY16 that included a pilot program effectiveness workshop.

The following sections provide yearly highlights and progress updates against the approved MI FY15 annual work plan.

### CONNECT PLANNING TO STRATEGY AND COORDINATE TEAM (ACTIVITY 0.1)

MI finalized the FY15 work plan and budget in early December 2015. The work plan is a document that connects FY15 milestones, activities, and resources to life of project goals. Furthermore, the work plan highlights tasks and products for each IR, as well as travel and staffing plans.

During the June monthly MI-E3/FAB meeting, the MI team provided an update on deliverable progress and completion outlook using the product tracking table and a new “stoplight” tool. This tool allowed MI to quickly show deliverable status at the end of Q3, ranging from green (on track for delivery in FY15), to yellow (need for E3/FAB input to ensure delivery), to red (unlikely to be completed in FY15). In the meeting, the IR leads were able to highlight key areas for discussion with the AMs to inform planning and delivery in Q4. Based on the success of this tool, the COR decided that the stoplight and tracking table format will be utilized throughout FY16 for the MI-E3/FAB meetings, which were rescheduled for the end of each quarter rather than monthly.

The FY16 Strategic Planning Retreat was held during September 2015 in Washington DC and Front Royal, Virginia. The retreat followed the new structure of a “Program Effectiveness” workshop in order to check progress against the MI results chain and inform adaptive management of MI. The goal of the retreat was to complete a strategic check-in on progress, key lessons learned, and emerging issues to inform planning for FY16 and the life of MI. Objectives included:

- Objective 1: Conduct a program effectiveness exercise by checking progress against MI results chain and informing adaptive management of MI
- Objective 2: Clarify MI contribution to integration and establish strong working relationship with BRIDGE
- Objective 3: Address and plan for institutionalizing best practices in implementing the Program Cycle in biodiversity programs
- Objective 4: Get 70% agreement with FAB on products and activities for the FY16 work plan
- Objective 5: Build cohesion across the MI team and with key USAID partners

In Q3, MI laid the foundation for the FY16 Strategic Planning Retreat by establishing a retreat working group comprised of the COP, DCOP, and IR2 and IR3 Activity Managers. This team met throughout Q3 and Q4 to discuss the retreat goals and objectives, and identify session topics and planning teams.

The retreat began in Washington, D.C., on September 21, with a Look Back Session to examine lessons learned over the past year. The Look Back Session was attended by 24 USAID staff. The off-site portion of the retreat was held from September 22-24 at the Society for Conservation Biology Institute in Front Royal.

The retreat was attended by E3/FAB AMs, the E3/FAB Office Director and management team, key E3/FAB Advisors, and staff from new USAID mechanisms LEARN and BRIDGE. MI utilized the attendance of BRIDGE and LEARN staff to identify opportunities for collaboration, cooperation, and strategic advantages.

MI and E3/FAB accomplished all objectives set for the retreat and resolved outstanding questions, enabling MI to plan strategically for the upcoming year. Sessions focused on integration, institutionalizing best practices in implementing the Program Cycle in biodiversity program, and generating, using, and sharing evidence.

The Learning and Adapting section below describes the outputs of the Program Effectiveness workshop in greater detail. MI will share a retreat report identifying key decisions in Q1 FY16 with retreat attendees.

## **LEVERAGE REPORTING TOOLS TO INFORM MANAGEMENT DECISIONS (ACTIVITY 0.2)**

Quarterly accruals reports and monthly vouchers have been submitted to E3/FAB consistently on schedule. Responsibility and management of budgetary tools were transmitted in Q3 from the Project Coordinator in South Lake Tahoe to the Program Officer in Washington, D.C., to realize a higher level of management in the project office.

MI rolled out several project management protocols during Q1 in order to provide useful budget management tools, understand project management and communication needs, provide product completion and delivery expectations for E3/FAB and IR leads, and track expenses consistently across the entire project. MI established a time tracking method that is consistent across all organizations and IRs. The new time tracking method provides the means to obtain precise expenditures for each time tracking category, which correlate with work plan activities. Further, an internal budget management tool was rolled out that is used to inform IR leads of the status of their budgets on a monthly basis.

## **REPORT PERFORMANCE QUARTERLY (ACTIVITY 0.3)**

The MI management team developed a Product Tracking Table<sup>7</sup> in Q1 and updated and improved it throughout FY15 following feedback from E3/FAB and MI staff. The Product Tracking Table captures pertinent information for work plan products such as status, percent complete, target completion date, and expected clearance needs. MI added links to final products and to products on the DEC, if applicable, to facilitate and streamline access to deliverables for internal staff and Activity Managers. The Table proved useful for structuring a mid-year and mid-project check-in meeting with the COR, COP, and DCOP on March 20, as well as for internal MI meetings in order to assess progress and check expectations through the year.

During Q2, MI staff drafted the internal MI M&E plan based on an updated results chain (see Figure 5 in the Learning and Adapting section). The M&E plan defines the framework and processes for MI managers to monitor, analyze and evaluate project performance and progress toward desired results. The M&E plan is an internal MI document that informed a revised PMP.

The PMP defines the management processes to monitor, analyze and evaluate MI's achievement of its goals and objectives. The revised PMP was drafted and submitted in Q3 to the COR and includes revised indicators, accompanying PIRS, and targets that reflect changes from the updated MI results chain. Based on feedback from the COR, the PMP was further refined and targets were updated in Q4. The revised PMP will be submitted to the COR and IR4 Activity Manager in Q1 FY16 for review.

The revised PMP includes the following proposed list of performance indicators:

1. Number of days of USG-funded technical assistance in natural resources management or biodiversity provided to counterparts or stakeholders
2. Number of person hours of training in natural resources management or biodiversity conservation supported by USG assistance
3. Magnitude of programming evaluated using theory-based approach
4. Quality of MI evaluation design

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<sup>7</sup> [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1djY9kxGqps-k4OJA1wi4UczdJr0Dz-3yXj2u3eJX\\_2M/edit?ts=562e8ed4#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1djY9kxGqps-k4OJA1wi4UczdJr0Dz-3yXj2u3eJX_2M/edit?ts=562e8ed4#gid=0)

5. Number of cases where IR1 focal Missions have been successful at aligning and linking three consecutive business processes
6. Number of dissemination activities implemented
7. Mission engagement in cross-Mission learning,
8. Number of completed research products
9. Number of approved adaptive management guidance documents and policy revisions developed with a key partner office.

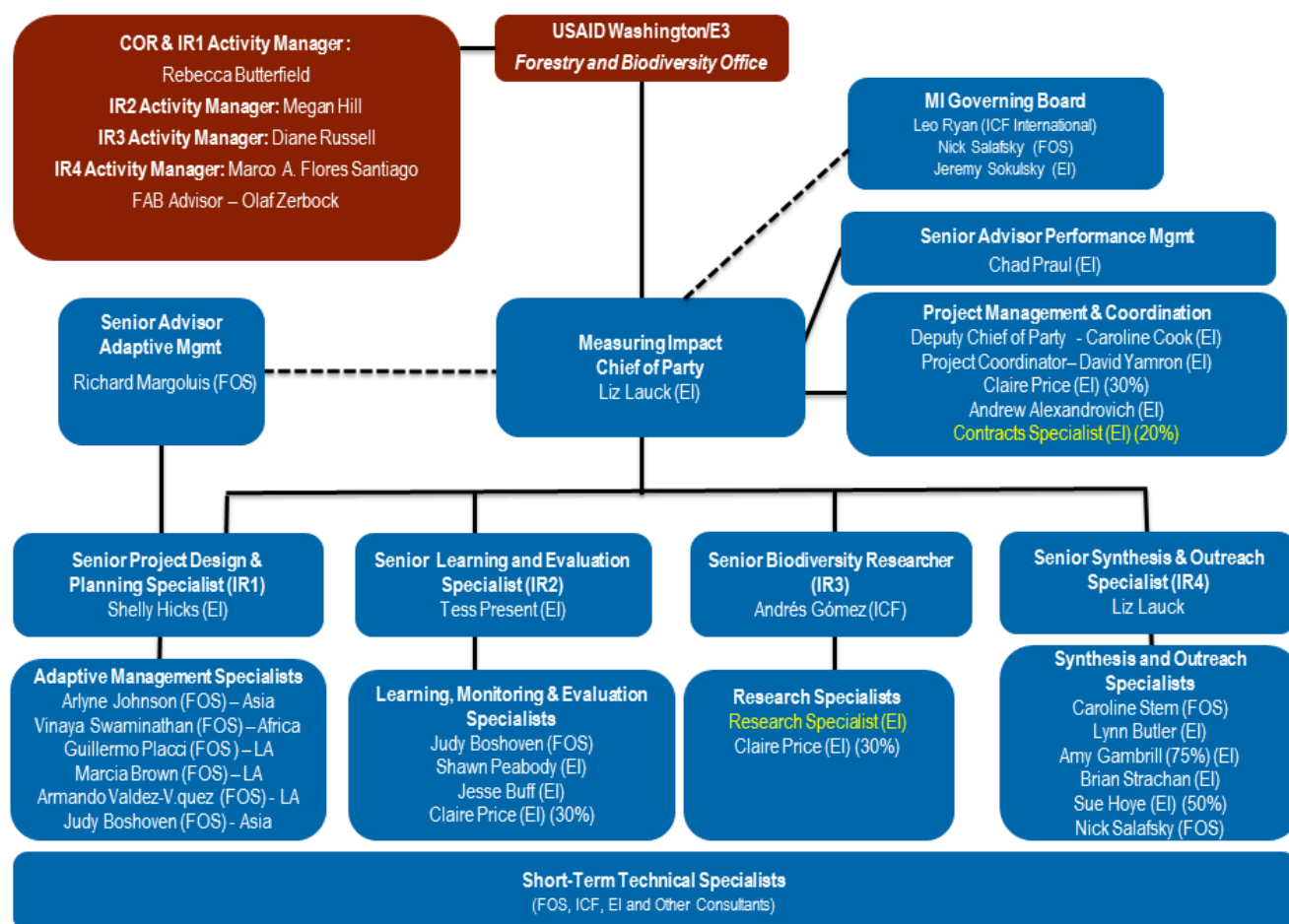
#### **MAINTAIN FULL STAFF (ACTIVITY 0.4)**

Environmental Incentives (EI) worked to fill six vacant positions during FY15. Recruitment actions included development of job descriptions, public posting of the positions, responses to qualified candidates, a complete screening and interview process coordinated across all partner organizations, consultation with USAID, and introduction to MI and partners through training and mentoring. EI hired four new staff during FY15, and will finalize the hiring process for the remaining two positions in early FY16 (the updated MI Organizational Chart is in Figure 3, yellow text depicts positions to be filled).

- **Learning Technical Specialist (IR2 Contributor):** The Learning Technical Specialist's primary responsibility is to provide technical support to the Cross-Mission Learning program in close collaboration with MI and E3/FAB staff and under the supervision of the IR2 Lead. EI completed a successful hiring process to fill the position of Learning Technical Specialist in IR2 in March. EI received applications from a large pool of talented individuals, held phone interviews with eight candidates, held final in-person interviews with three candidates, reviewed writing exercises, and agreed to hire Jesse Buff for the position. He began in April 2015.
- **Adaptive Management Specialist (IR1-4 Contributor):** The AM Specialist works across IR1 and IR4, coordinating and contributing to cross-IR efforts. EI completed a successful hiring process to fill the position of AM Technical Specialist in May. EI management met with potential candidates and evaluated their suitability for the position, and agreed to hire Lynn Butler to begin work in May 2015.
- **Senior Synthesis and Outreach Specialists (IR4 Contributors):** Following an extended recruiting process, EI hired Amy Gambrill on October 1, 2015 to serve as MI's Senior Synthesis and Outreach Specialist. This position is tasked with leading support to production and dissemination of MI products and coordination with the E3/FAB CKM lead and with ECO. EI advertised and reviewed several applications for this position, and EI management met with potential candidates and evaluated their suitability for the position. MI will use 75 percent of Amy Gambrill's time. To round out MI's communications bench, EI is engaging Sue Hoyer on a part-time (up to 50 percent) capacity to produce key communications outputs. Ms. Hoyer has extensive experience with USAID (Water Office) and brings a skill set that complements Ms. Gambrill's. Together these two communications professionals will commit 1.25 FTE to MI, providing a range of skills extremely difficult to find in one individual, including strategic communications skills, writing, editing, design, 508-compliance, video production and editing, and management.
- **Project Coordinator (IR0 Contributor):** The former Project Coordinator, Claire Price, was reallocated to provide additional support to IR2 and IR3, resulting in the need to hire a replacement Project Coordinator to take on her former duties. A TOR was distributed for this position in Q4, and EI received a number of applications from promising candidates. EI conducted phone screens with six candidates, held final interviews with three top candidates, reviewed writing and Excel exercises, and agreed to hire David Yamron for the position beginning on October 1, 2015.
- **Research Specialist (IR2, 3, 4 Contributor):** The Research Specialist will serve as an evidence and research specialist to deliver targeted support across IR2, IR3, and IR4. MI partner organization ICF has redirected much of Dr. Anila Jacob's time away from MI deliverables following completion of the technical products she led during FY15. This reduction in LOE for Dr. Jacob necessitated a recruiting process for the Research Specialist. Environmental Incentives drafted and disseminated a TOR for the Research Specialist in FY15 Q4, and will finalize the hiring process in Q1 FY16. The new Research Specialist will work on a suite of research priorities in IR2, IR3, and IR4, including leading and managing the production of toolkits for Use of Evidence in PAD Design/The Big Bets (Action 3.4.1 and 4.3.3). The Research Specialist will report to the COP because the position is based in EI and calls upon staff of all IRs.

- **Contracts Compliance Specialist (IR0 Contributor):** Following Elaine Sabourin's resignation notification for June 2015, EI developed and advertised for a Contracts Compliance Specialist. EI identified two strong candidates for this position, and will conduct final interviews in October 2015. This position will be 20% of full time.

MI appointed FOS staff as regional leads for the Missions in FY15: Marcia Brown is now the regional lead for South America, including Colombia, SAR, and Peru, with Guillermo Placci on point for Brazil and Mozambique; Arlyne Johnson is the regional lead for Vietnam, Indonesia, Nepal and Philippines; and Vinaya Swaminathan is the lead for Madagascar, CARPE and Uganda. Lastly, IR1 required more of Judy Boshoven, Richard Margoluis, Ilke Tilders, and Shawn Peabody's time to assist with supporting the work of IR1 in Missions.



**Figure 3:** MI team organization structure. Yellow text designates positions to be filled in FY16.

## **PROVIDE SYSTEMS, PROCESSES AND POLICIES (ACTIVITY 0.5)**

EI staff successfully completed an audit of Environmental Incentives' FY13 incurred cost proposal. Response to the audit firm's initial request for policy and procedure documents further reinforced the results obtained through the Compliance Review, highlighting areas where enhancements are needed to Environmental Incentives' existing policies and procedures, and served to inform the development and execution of the Compliance Review Management Action Plan. The audit was conducted in Q2 and Q3.

EI developed and updated a number of policies and procedures that will aid in the administration of MI in accordance with applicable Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and USAID Acquisition Regulation (AIDAR) regulations: a procurement policy, subcontract management guidelines, business meals, gifts, and entertainment policy, expense report policy, and inventory management guidelines.

Conflict of Interest (COI) /SBU guidance, including procedures for identifying and mitigating possible COI situations, have been developed specifically for MI. IR0 staff updated and internally reviewed a COI/SBU policy and conducted an all-staff training on COI/SBU on April 22. The training was recorded and has been shared with staff hired after April 22. IR0 staff worked to ease the transition between Contracts Compliance Specialists following Elaine Sabourin's resignation in Q3, prioritizing policies and procedures for delivery before her final day, as well as delegating additional responsibilities to other members of the management team in the interim. All deliverables committed to by the former Contracts Specialist were delivered before her final working day of June 26. The IR0 team continued effective management of these tasks through the remainder of FY15, and will complete the transition upon hiring a replacement Specialist in early FY16.

## **ADMINISTER AND MANAGE OPERATIONS (ACTIVITY 0.6)**

Environmental Incentives conducted subcontract negotiations with ICF and FOS, and finalized and executed the subcontracts on March 11 and 22, respectively. Additionally, EI developed and effectively managed a subcontract with WCS and two consulting agreements with Bernd Cordes and Greg Berger. Bernd Cordes was contracted to perform research on three main objectives that relate to the BCN's original TOC about linked enterprise-based strategies for conservation, and the BCN's "meta" TOC regarding the utility of learning networks. WCS was contracted by EI to carry out research to identify the conditions in which community engagement decreases illegal poaching and wildlife trafficking. Greg Berger is an independent designer who was contracted by EI to format, lay out, and perform 508 compliance on the SCAPES Executive Summary, Final Report, and Annexes.

### **Key Products**

- FY15 Work Plan and Budget (Deliverable 0.1.A)
- Monthly Coordination Reports (Deliverable 0.1.B)
- FY16 Strategy and Planning Retreat (Deliverable 0.1.C)
- Four Quarterly FY15 Accrual Reports (Deliverable 0.2.A)
- Twelve Monthly Vouchers (Deliverable 0.2.B)
- Draft Revised PMP (Deliverable 0.3.A)
- Three Quarterly Performance Reports and FY15 Annual Report (Deliverable 0.3.B)
- Six TORs for Vacant Positions, four Employment Contracts (Deliverable 0.4)



### III. LEARNING AND ADAPTING

The MI PMP and M&E plan, derived from the MI results chain, contain indicators that track progress toward meeting project goals. The PMP defines the performance management framework and expectations for performance over the life of the contract. It includes detailed definitions for project indicators, rationale for their selection, data collection, reporting and quality assessment methods, and numeric targets for benchmarking. MI revised the PMP in Q3 and Q4 of FY15 based on the updated FY15 Results Chain outcomes and indicators. In Q1 FY16, MI will complete the revised PMP and the internal M&E plan, outlining the project's full scope of M&E processes. MI will implement the M&E plan by rolling out a revised tracking system for the PMP indicators and then tracking the data and reporting the results to E3/FAB. MI will transition to tracking indicators exclusively in Miradi during FY16.

The original MI results chain depicted in Figure 4 was the basis for MI's work in FY13. The results chain shows relationships between actions performed and eventual outcomes, and depicts strategies and actions as yellow shapes, Intermediate Results (IR) and sub-IRs as blue boxes, outcomes in the green box on the right side, and PMP indicators as purple shapes. In Q1 FY14, the results chain was revised to reflect the re-scoping that occurred during the strategic planning retreat in September 2013 and during development of the FY14 work plan. The results chain was further updated in FY15 and this will be reported against in FY16 (see Figure 5). MI has not yet received USAID approval of its revised PMP and associated indicators, and thus is reporting here against indicators identified in the approved PMP and FY13 results chain.

Another critical component informing MI's learning and adapting occurred through the use of a Program Effectiveness workshop during the FY16 Strategic Planning retreat in September (see Activity 0.1) in order to check progress against the updated results chain and inform adaptive management of MI. A Synthesis of Findings was conducted by IR0 staff that informed the Program Effectiveness workshop and strategic planning for FY16. During Q4, 38 interviews were conducted with 14 staff from E3/FAB including all Activity Managers and the Office Director, 19 MI staff, and 5 Mission POCs. MI collected feedback on product delivery in FY15, internal processes, and client perceptions of highlights and challenges. A synthesis of these findings, as well as analyses of the budget, actions and key results were presented during the Look Back session of the retreat (on September 21) to 24 staff across E3/FAB and PPL. Following this presentation MI hosted two World Café discussion sessions with all participants to discuss emerging topics: (1) how to identify and overcome some of the barriers to uptake; (2) how to learn from and leverage CWC process to understand the use of common interventions and indicators as a foundation for learning; (3) what does it mean to use evidence or assessments at Mission level; and (4) how to increase exposure of Program Officers, Contracting Officers, and Mission Directors to MI and build capacity of USAID staff.

A summary of the findings from the interviews conducted with E3/FAB staff includes the following highlights, along with challenges underlined. Priorities for FY16 were also discussed and are outlined below.

E3/FAB staff feedback on MI FY15 highlights and challenges:

- Strong working relationship between MI and FAB
- Assistance MI is offering across IRs is relevant and timely
- FAB office has been an effective builder of relationships (with PPL, GCC, and the Missions)
- Technical Assistance in demand
- MI tools and approaches consistently viewed as valuable in implementing the Program Cycle
  - Encountering barriers to uptake
  - Capacity to implement depends on the Mission's time, bandwidth, leadership, and business processes
- MI created a solid body of work that reflects what FAB is trying to accomplish

- Need to improve production turn-around and become more effective at disseminating products
- MI's support to develop indicators and associated tools for USAID to combat wildlife crime was deemed very helpful
  - Challenge shared by FAB and MI to balance the time needed to develop and vet the comprehensive technical content with immediate needs by Missions
- MI involvement in E3/FAB's integration working groups viewed as very useful
- FAB and MI completing Biodiversity How-To Guides, worked closely with PPL, and completed the Miradi pilot and non-environment pilot
  - Need to effectively disseminate products

MI took the findings of the Look Back portion of the Program Effectiveness workshop and applied them to the exercise of refining our strategic approaches for implementation during FY16. As part of this process, MI staff and Activity Managers considered proposed actions for FY16, suggested refinements, reviewed results, key audiences, outcomes, and performance targets, and agreed on a set of actions and decisions to ensure that FY16 results in significant progress towards LOP goals.

Priorities identified for FY16 include:

1. Work across IRs on building and generating evidence: Build a network around areas where Missions are "placing big bets without evidence"
2. Continue to provide effective TA to Missions and work with FAB to track and support uptake
3. Provide simple communications and support tools
4. Support Learning
5. Work with FAB and Missions to understand needs and opportunities around Analyzing, Learning, and Adapting
6. Develop a cooperation strategy with BRIDGE



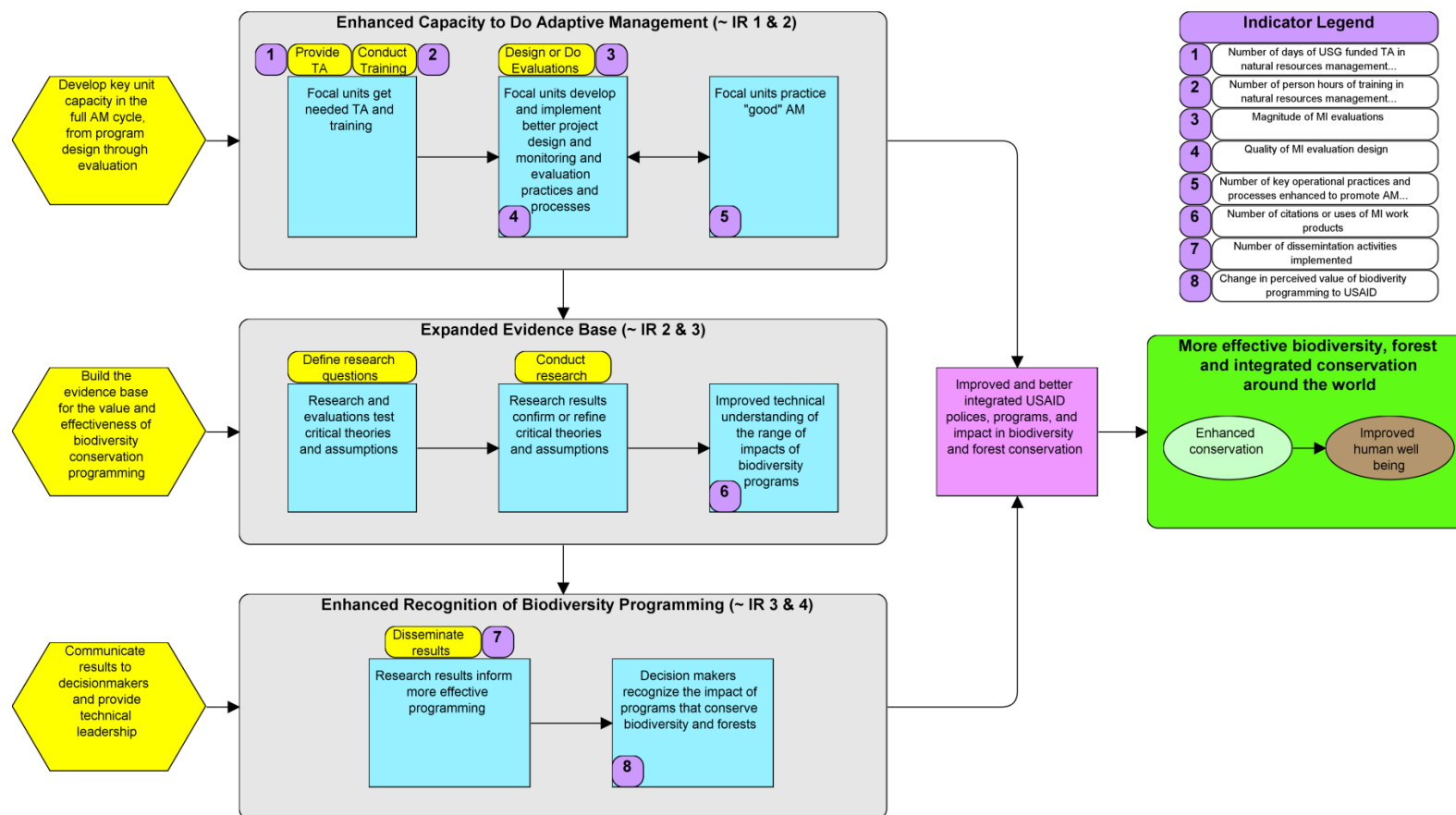


Figure 4: MI FY13 Results Chain

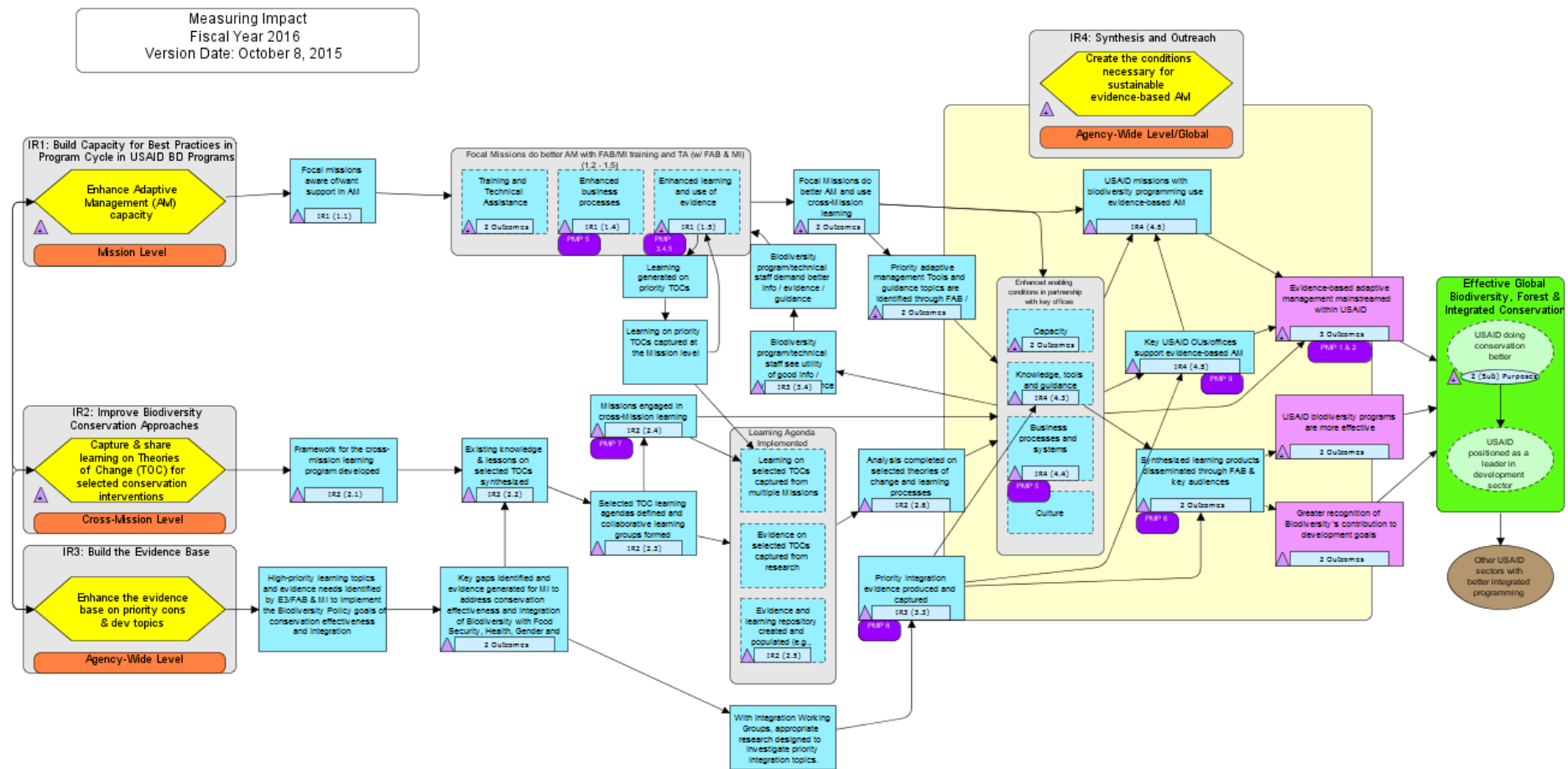


Figure 5: MI FY15 Results Chain

## MONITORING RESULTS

The PMP defined the following indicators and associated targets for each year of the project as well as life of project.

Indicator Number	Indicator	Annual and Life of Project Targets						FY13 Totals	FY14 Totals	FY15 Totals	LOP Totals
		FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	Total				
Enhance Capacity to Do Adaptive Management											
#1	Number of days of USG-funded TA in natural resources management and/or biodiversity provided to counterparts or stakeholders	300	1,800	1,700	1,900	1,200	6,900	520.94	915.62	1,002.54	2,439.1
#2	Number of person hours of training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation supported by USG assistance	800	1,600	1,800	1,800	1,200	7,200	428	4,384	4,687	9,499
#3	Magnitude of MI evaluations	\$75k	\$975k	\$850k	\$700k	\$700k	\$3.3M	\$167,396	\$255,477	\$10,049	\$432,922
#4	Quality of MI evaluation design						20% exclusive 15% shared 5% reviewer <1% no engage	N/A	45% increase from baseline	N/A	45% increase from baseline
#5	Number of key operational practices and processes enhanced to promote the application of AM at the institutional level						TBD	N/A	N/A	0	0
Enhance Recognition of Biodiversity Importance											
#6	Number of dissemination activities implemented	10	20	30	40	30	130	4	25	67	96
#7	Number of citations or uses of MI work products	50	200	400	500	500	1,650	0	0	5	5

**Table 2: Indicator and Target Summary Table with FY13, FY14, FY15, and Life of Project Totals**

## TESTING ASSUMPTIONS

### MI THEORY OF CHANGE

The goal of MI is to achieve more effective biodiversity, forest and integrated conservation around the world. To realize this goal, MI has defined three strategies, with key assumptions, to define progress towards reaching MI's goal of more effective conservation, including (1) build focal unit capacity in the full AM cycle, from program design through evaluation; (2) build the evidence base for the value and effectiveness of biodiversity conservation and integrated programming; and (3) communicate results to decision makers and provide technical leadership. Collectively, these strategies will result in improved and better integrated USAID policies, programs and impact in biodiversity and forest conservation. The indicators listed in Table 2 are drawn from the FY13 Results Chain (Figure 4), and are intended to monitor progress and incremental steps towards achieving the ultimate project goal of more effective conservation. The indicators and the results chain will also help E3/FAB and the MI team to test core assumptions, and adapt to a changing environment as described in the following section.

### STRATEGY ONE – DEVELOP KEY UNIT CAPACITY IN THE FULL ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT CYCLE

Strategy one declares that if MI and E3/FAB allocate time and resources to develop key unit capacity in the full AM cycle, from program design through evaluation, focal units will:

- Get TA and training
- Develop and implement better project design and monitoring and evaluation practices and processes
- Practice good AM

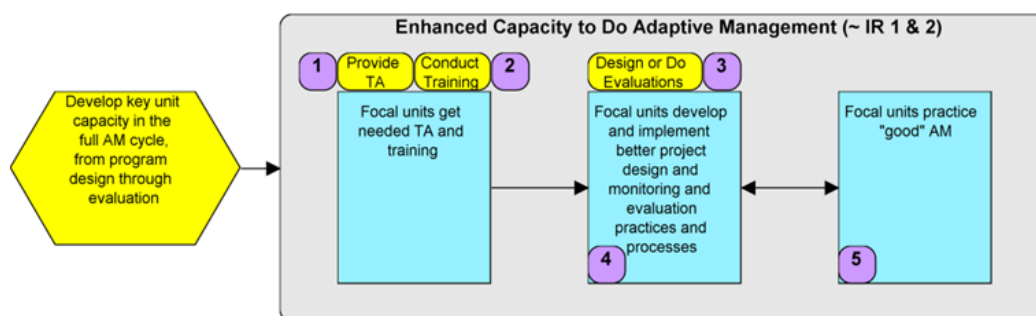


Figure 6: IRs 1 and 2

**INDICATOR 1 – NUMBER OF DAYS OF USG-FUNDED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND/OR BIODIVERSITY PROVIDED TO COUNTERPARTS OR STAKEHOLDERS**

MI provided 1,003 days of USG-funded TA in FY15, which is a 9.5% increase from FY14, but does not meet the FY15 target of 1,700 days. At this point in the project, MI has provided a total of 2,439 days of TA between FYs 13-15, which falls short of the cumulative target of 3,800. In FY15, IRs 1 and 3 provided the majority of TA, each providing approximately 44% and 37% of the total TA, respectively. The majority of the remaining 20% of TA provided in FY15 was delivered by IR 2 (18%), and the remainder was delivered by IR4 (1%).

Of the total 1,003 days of TA provided in FY15, approximately 45% was provided to Missions and the remaining 55% to E3/FAB. The TA provided to E3/FAB included support for the implementation of the Biodiversity Policy and Agency-wide initiatives. A small amount of TA (approximately four days) was provided to non-MI focal units. There was some overlap in the types of assistance between TA provided to E3/FAB and to Missions, however, generally speaking, the types of assistance provided to E3/FAB differed from TA provided to Missions.

The revised PMP will include updated targets for this indicator for FY16-17.

*Table 3: Summary of TA provided to Missions and E3/FAB*

Type of Assistance	Total Days of TA
<b>TA provided to Missions</b>	<b>443.95</b>
CARPE	73.35
Indonesia	49.96
Madagascar	53.27
Mozambique	19.48
Nepal	10.3
Peru	69.89
Philippines	49.08
RDMA	51.86
SAR/ICAA	54.84
Uganda	6.92
Vietnam	5.02
<b>TA provided to E3/FAB</b>	<b>554.71</b>
IR2	182.15
IR3	372.81
IR4	2.125
<b>Other TA</b>	<b>3.88</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1002.54</b>

## INDICATOR 2 – NUMBER OF PERSON HOURS OF TRAINING IN NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND/OR BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION SUPPORTED BY USG ASSISTANCE

MI far exceeded the FY15 target of 1,600 hours, logging 4,687 person-hours of training. MI hosted 22 trainings, which were attended by 238 attendees from nine focal missions, E3/FAB, and other USAID counterparts. Of the 4,687 person-hours of training provided, 45% of the hours were for female participants while the other 55% were for male participants. Additionally, 90% of training was provided to focal Missions, including CARPE, Indonesia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Peru, Philippines, SAR/ICAA, Vietnam, and RDMA. The other 10% of training was primarily delivered to non-MI focal units, including PPL/LER and PPL/SPP. The revised PMP will include updated targets for this indicator for FY16-17.

Training delivered through MI in FY15 focused on the following themes and is captured in Table 4:

- Project conceptualization and design
- Performance monitoring design
- Evaluation design
- Project implementation
- Performance monitoring implementation
- Evaluation implementation
- Systematic Learning and Adapting

**Table 4:** Trainings provided in FY15, indicating the focal units that received training by thematic area.

	Project Conceptualization & Design	Performance Monitoring Design	Evaluation Design	Project Implementation	Performance Monitoring Implementation	Evaluation Implementation	Systematic Learning & Adapting
<b>CARPE</b>		x	x	x	x		
<b>Indonesia</b>		x	x	x	x		
<b>Madagascar</b>	x	x		x			
<b>Mozambique</b>				x	x		
<b>Peru</b>	x	x					x
<b>Philippines</b>			x	x	x	x	x
<b>SAR/ICAA</b>	x	x					x
<b>Vietnam</b>				x			
<b>E3/FAB</b>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<b>Non-MI Focal Unit</b>	x	x	x	x	x	x	x



TA and training provided through MI focused on the following seven themes and corresponding training modules:

### **Project Conceptualization and Design**

Through TA and training provided through MI, Mission staff are learning how to develop and use situation models to identify conservation focal interests, threats, and drivers, resulting in clearly defined causal relationships amongst critical factors and the identification of potential development pathways. Mission staff are further trained on how to use results chains to clearly define TOCs, and associated outputs, outcomes and goals. Consistent with the Program Cycle guidance, MI is helping USAID staff to convert TOCs into clear plans of action, ensuring a clear transition from project design to planning monitoring and evaluation efforts. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Project scope and purpose
- Targets and viability
- Threats and drivers
- Intervention selection
- TOCs

### **Performance Monitoring Design**

Mission staff are learning how to use sound TOCs to select indicators and methods to assess program effectiveness. In this context, MI is working with Missions to better understand the relationship between indicators for both monitoring and evaluation and learning purposes, including the need to prioritize and sequence indicators for monitoring performance, and to analyze a combination of indicators to define conditions for likely success and impact. Linking monitoring efforts to learning questions and key outcomes in TOCs provides: (1) the foundation to assess program effectiveness, (2) the basis for robust performance evaluations, (3) a framework to identify and narrow priority questions to test the relationship between two variables in an impact evaluation, and (4) organized data and information in a way to service learning and adapting needs for the Agency. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Indicator selection
- Defining outcomes, outputs and goals
- Monitoring methods
- Defining and planning for baselines

### **Evaluation and Learning Design**

MI is helping Missions to better understand and comply with the Evaluation Policy. This includes: (1) interpreting the policy for Mission staff to inform decisions and investments towards performance or impact evaluations, and (2) leveraging TOCs to identify and prioritize evaluation and/or learning questions, define methods, and analyze the cost/benefits of priority questions to inform the evaluation design and learning to inform the Project ME&L Plan. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Intro to USAID Evaluation Policy
- Conceptualize evaluation approach and design
- Develop evaluation scope of work
- Intro to learning in the context of USAID and the Program Cycle
- Define learning questions

### **Project Implementation**

In the context of USAID, project implementation spans numerous business practices and processes where Mission staff interface with Washington and with implementing partners. With MI's assistance, Missions are learning to align the PAD design process more closely with the procurement process for new mechanisms, leverage the procurement process to more effectively institutionalize ME&L systems, and appropriately plan and budget for M, E, and L functions both within the Mission and across portfolios. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Best practice for project design to inform procurement process

### **Performance Monitoring Implementation**

With MI's assistance, Missions are working to upgrade their systems to better manage, collect, store and analyze performance data. This entails articulating roles and responsibilities and setting new expectations for both USAID staff and implementing partners in their shared role to assess program effectiveness, at a minimum requiring a systematized monitoring and reporting system from implementing partner to inform the Mission's monitoring, evaluation and learning needs. In support of these efforts, E3/FAB, PPL, and MI test piloted the Miradi Software in four Missions to strengthen the monitoring function and flow of data and communication between implementing partners and USAID staff. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Linking M&E across scales
- Best practice for systematic reporting across M&E, work planning, and reporting
- Best practice for capturing, storing and analyzing results
- Best practice for facilitating implementing partner annual program effectiveness workshop
- Test pilot new Miradi software to support monitoring, learning and adapting

### **Evaluation Implementation**

Evaluations in focal Missions are conducted by third parties, thus MI's primary role is to help Mission staff fully understand the results of evaluations and to draw out lessons learned to inform project modifications or design of new mechanisms. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Analyze evaluation results to inform decision making and project designs

### **Systematic Learning and Adapting**

Changes brought about by the Program Cycle and the Evaluation Policy requires all Missions to report on the effectiveness and impact of USAID investments at three levels: mechanism, PAD, and Country Development Cooperation Strategy. To do this, MI is working with focal Missions to: develop learning portfolios on priority TOCs; assist USAID and implementing partners to enhance the use of evidence and learning through the Program Cycle; and assist in better informing the Mission Portfolio Review, a critical juncture for evaluating progress, impact and decision making. TA and training modules delivered for this theme include:

- Developing learning portfolios
- Using data to improve projects
- Best practices for conducting portfolio reviews

### **INDICATOR 3 – MAGNITUDE OF MI EVALUATIONS**

MI logged \$10,049 towards evaluation magnitude in FY15, which falls below the FY15 target set forth in the PMP. This shortcoming was expected considering the shift of IR2's focus from evaluations to the creation of a Cross-Mission Learning Program. Furthermore, MI acknowledged in the FY14 Annual Performance Report that it expected to log minimal data towards this indicator in FY15. All of the evaluation magnitude logged in FY15 was in service of the SCAPES evaluation and the Forest, Climate, and Communities Alliance (FCCA) lessons learned analysis, which were both exclusively designed by MI.

This indicator and targets are currently being revised under the updated MI PMP. The revised indicator will measure the size (magnitude in dollars) of the biodiversity-funded program that is being evaluated using MI-designed or -influenced scopes of work or approaches, and will be disaggregated by type of evaluation: whether retrospective or prospective and whether performance or impact. This indicator is complemented by a measure of evaluation quality, including the use of theory-based approaches, in Indicator #4 below.

### **INDICATOR 4 – QUALITY OF MI EVALUATION DESIGN**

MI did not log any data towards this indicator in FY15. Similarly to Indicator 3, this indicator is being revised in the updated PMP. The revised indicator will capture the quality of evaluation SOWs that are directly designed by MI or influenced by the best practices in implementing the Program Cycle that MI and E3/FAB are developing and disseminating. The quality of the evaluation SOWs will be determined by an independent peer reviewer, based on criteria derived from best practices in the evaluation field and the best practices for implementing the Program Cycle developed by MI and E3/FAB. Indicator results will demonstrate the quality of MI evaluation SOWs and the ability of MI to build the capacity of USAID staff to commission, co-design, and apply the findings of evaluations that use best practices.

### **INDICATOR 5 – NUMBER OF KEY OPERATIONAL PRACTICES AND PROCESSES ENHANCED TO PROMOTE THE APPLICATION OF AM AT THE INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL**

This indicator and targets for FY16-17 are being revised under the updated MI PMP, and MI will begin to collect and report on results in FY16. The updated indicator will demonstrate the degree to which MI focal Missions are using, applying, and linking best practices in implementing the Program Cycle in biodiversity programs to key business processes. The indicator focuses on business processes, a key aspect of institutionalization, under the assumption that good processes will influence effective biodiversity programming, and achieve greater impact.

## LESSONS LEARNED – STRATEGY ONE

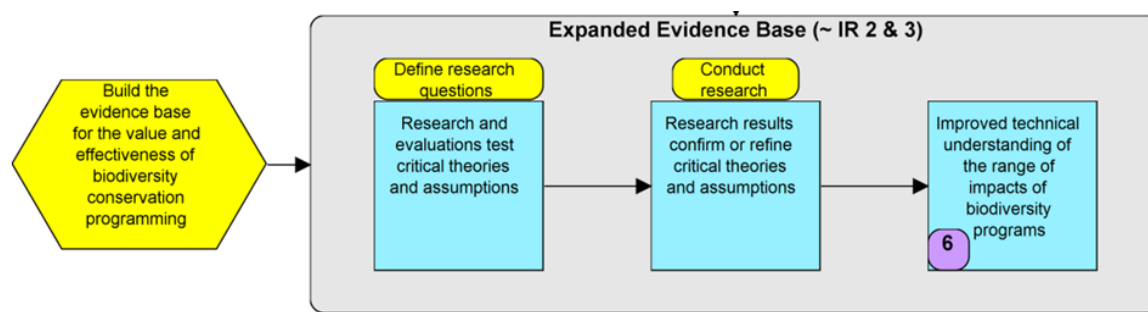
The most significant progress in FY15 was made towards the first two results in strategy one: *focal units get needed TA and training, and focal units develop and implement better project design and monitoring and evaluation practices and processes*. Lessons learned that will inform MI's approach moving forward include:

- Demand has continued to grow for Mission monitoring and evaluation. TA and training. Additionally, recent revisions to the ADS require CLA plans at the strategy level, which has sparked demand from Missions for learning frameworks at the project level. This new policy has created the conditions necessary to scale MI's tools to help Missions meet this demand to link M&E efforts at multiple scales.
- Socializing the processes and tools developed by MI and Missions with USAID's Program, Contracting, and Front Offices has been a challenge for IR1 and MI as a whole. For instance, Environment Offices may design robust projects with sound M&E frameworks, but those products may be changed drastically when they reach the Program, Contracting, and Front Offices. This challenge can be attributed to lack of understanding of the process or policy requirements, and tends to undermine the ability of the Environment Offices ability to comply with the Biodiversity Policy, Evaluation Policy, and the ADS/Program Cycle requirements for learning and adapting.
  - To address this challenge, MI will focus on engaging all offices from the beginning of design so that when the products go into the next stage of the business process, their logic will be understood and the concepts and work done within the products will remain intact.
- In order to make MI's products effective, it is essential that the necessary business processes to put them into practice are understood and leveraged. For instance, it is critical that the roles and responsibilities between USAID and implementing partners is understood so that USAID can plan, resource, and staff monitoring, evaluation, and learning functions accordingly. MI's expertise will help Missions understand the Environment Offices capacity to fulfill these functions. Based on that understanding, Missions will be empowered to effectively create Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) plans that define the required number and types of mechanism, and frame each activity scope of work and budget to accommodate the effort allocated to monitoring, evaluation, and learning.
- As reflected in updated PMP Indicator #5, it is critical for MI to link consecutive business processes. If any of the business processes are overlooked or not considered, the framework for implementing adaptive management within USAID is broken down. The business processes of focus in the updated PMP Indicator #5 include
  - Project level monitoring, evaluation, and learning plans,
  - A&A plans
  - Activity scopes of work/procurement processes,
  - Activity M&E frameworks, and
  - Portfolio reviews.
- MI utilized and discovered synergies between two approaches to defining indicators for combating wildlife crime. First, IR3 performed a literature review of indicators that were either in use or that have been used in efforts to combat wildlife crime. Shortly after, IR2 identified ten priority interventions for which it created TOCs and results chains. Using those results chains, MI was able to facilitate the selection of key results and crosswalk them with the IR3 literature review.
  - Consequently, MI minimized the selection of indicators that did not build on existing data sets or resources. Efficiencies were created by leveraging previous efforts through the indicator review by IR3, and MI was able to fill a knowledge gap rather than repeat previous efforts to define CWC indicators.
- MI's work on TOCs and situation models for combating wildlife crime was leveraged in its technical assistance to the RDMA Mission. From this experience, MI learned that the high-level tools it has developed can be applied to specific project designs for specific Missions.

## STRATEGY TWO – BUILD THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR THE VALUE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION PROGRAMMING

Strategy two reasons that if MI and E3/FAB allocate time and resources to build the evidence base for the value and effectiveness of biodiversity conservation programming:

- Research and evaluations will test critical theories and assumptions,
- Research and results will confirm or refine critical theories and assumptions, and
- Technical understanding of the range of impacts of biodiversity programming will be improved.



**Figure 7: IRs 2 and 3**

#### INDICATOR 6 – NUMBER OF DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED

Each IR implemented dissemination activities in FY15, putting MI far beyond the FY15 target of 30 with 67 dissemination activities. Furthermore, MI has now implemented 96 dissemination activities to date, which exceeds its cumulative target for FYs 13-15 of 60. The majority (47) of the dissemination activities were delivered as verbal presentations and a substantial amount (13) were also delivered via active circulation. The remaining seven dissemination activities were grey literature publications and postings.

With the rollout of the cross-mission learning program, IR2 notably increased its dissemination activities and implemented roughly half (34) of the total logged in FY15. Topics ranged from combating wildlife crime, conservation enterprises, the cross-mission learning program, organizational learning, and the SCAPES evaluation and FCCA lessons learned analysis. The majority of the dissemination activities were delivered as verbal presentations, although IR2 delivered grey literature publications, postings, and active circulations as well. All but three of the dissemination activities were delivered to USAID, while the others were delivered to external audiences.

IR4 was also responsible for 19 dissemination activities in FY15, which was a substantial portion of the total logged by MI. The dissemination activities were highly variable and included topics such as the use of TOCs in the Program Cycle, gender integration, MI approaches, the Research Agenda, and indicator selection. All of IR4's dissemination activities were delivered by verbal presentation or active circulation, and eight of the 19 were delivered to external audiences.

The remaining 14 dissemination activities were either delivered by IRs 1 and 3 or were not specific to an IR. Topics ranged from community engagement research done by WCS, constituency building, and lessons learned from working with MI focal missions. The targets for this indicator will be revised in the updated PMP.

## LESSONS LEARNED – STRATEGY TWO

MI achieved critical milestones in FY15 advancing towards the second and third results within strategy two – *research and results will confirm or refine critical theories and assumptions, and technical understanding of the range of impacts of biodiversity programming will be improved*. Lessons learned that will inform MI's approach in the future include:

- Webinars were an effective method for disseminating MI's work and engaging Missions. Webinars served as an efficient platform for disseminating information broadly about MI activities, and also set the stage for MI to follow up with Mission staff and gain in-depth content and insights. Furthermore, MI had active participation through the webinars. In particular, the Conservation Enterprises webinar was attended by 34 Mission staff from seven countries.
- MI successfully utilized a collaborative approach to engage staff from Missions and E3/FAB to provide input on the Combating Wildlife Crime Toolkit. This collaborative approach piqued the interest of USAID staff to engage in MI dissemination activities and continue to provide input on the Toolkit. The general lesson taken from this is that people are most willing to collaborate and provide input when the subject is current and relevant to their work.
- FY16 will be a year with substantial communication of MI products. It is important that MI find efficiencies, both internally and with E3/FAB, in the review, approval, and communications of its work. Faster processes will allow for more strategic and coordinated communication of messages and key products, which will improve the reach and impact of communication efforts.
- It is valuable for IR3 to continue collaboration with E3/FAB's integration working groups in order to improve the scoping, definition, and refinement of IR3 research activities. In particular, IR3 worked with Food Security and Global Health working groups at E3/FAB in FY15.
- Since IR3 is not designed or resourced to perform primary data collection, it is most effective at building the evidence base when it synthesizes and analyzes findings from literature reviews, spatial data sets, program evaluation data, and data from demographic and health surveys.



## STRATEGY THREE – COMMUNICATE RESULTS TO DECISION MAKERS AND PROVIDE TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP

Strategy three reasons that if MI and E3/FAB allocate time and resources to communicate results to decision makers and provide technical leadership:

- Research results will inform more effective programming and
- Decision makers will recognize the impact of programs that conserve biodiversity and forests.

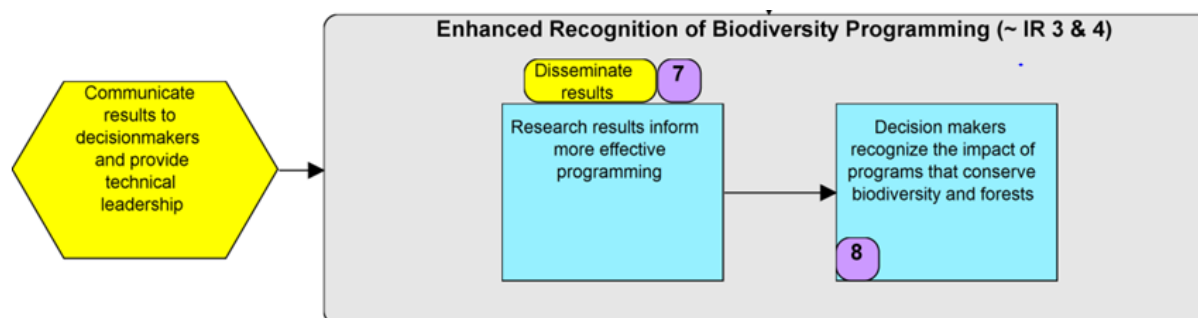


Figure 8: IRs 3 and 4

### INDICATOR 7 – NUMBER OF CITATIONS OR USES OF MI WORK PRODUCTS

There were five known citations and uses of MI work products in FY15. Prior to FY15, there were no known citations. This change can be directly correlated with MI moving out of project conceptualization phase and into production.

Of the five citations, two were website hits, one was a grey literature citation, one was a presentation citation, and one was a use of an MI product by the RDMA mission. Three of the five were citations by external audiences, while the other two were by USAID. The MI products cited or used were the Research Agenda, the community engagement in traffic enforcement framing brief, the Feed the Future pilot in Uganda, and the Combating Wildlife Crime Toolkit. This indicator will be dropped in the revised PMP.

### LESSONS LEARNED – STRATEGY THREE

Activity three – *communicate results to decision makers and provide technical leadership* – began to take shape and show results in FY15. MI honed its research priorities in FY15, which enabled it to produce more research products. Lessons learned that will inform MI research going forward are as follows:

- Substantially increasing MI dissemination activities leads to more citations of MI's work. This is indicative of uptake of MI products and suggests that the research results of MI will inform more effective programming, and will help decision makers recognize the impact of programs that conserve biodiversity and forests.
- Partnering with leading research organizations, such as TNC, WCS, and AMNH brings a breadth of expertise that allows IR3 to more effectively build the evidence base. Partnering also allows MI to leverage the extensive networks that these organizations, who are leaders in the field, bring to the table. The research topics on which IR3 engaged outside experts were community involvement in wildlife trafficking enforcement, stakeholder engagement, and gender and biodiversity governance.
- It is important to plan for formal research products (e.g. manuscripts for peer review literature) and non-technical products from the beginning of the design phase so that uptake from non-technical audiences is achieved.